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In Gods *cauſe,* & *y^e:* Kings, *our* Brownrige *was*
A Boanerges, *though a* Barnabas —

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SERMONS

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Right Reverend

FATHER in GOD,

RALPH BROWNRIG,

LATE

LORD BISHOP

OF

EXCETER.

Published by WILLIAM MARTYN, *M. A.*
Sometimes Preacher at the ROLLS.

The First Volume.

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SERMONS

Right Reverend

LORD BISHOP

OF

EXETER.

To His most Sacred MAJESTY,

CHARLES II.

By the Grace of GOD,

King of *Great Britain*, *France*, and *Ireland*,

Defender of the Faith.

Most Gracious, and Dread Sovereign,



E read in the Book of *Samuel*, that *the Sons of* Belial *brought no Preſents to the King.* That I may not be thought to be one of that *accurſed crue*, I here preſent to your *Sacred Majeſty* (though not ſo ſoon as I deſired) *the Sword* of *Goliah*; which I found wrapped up *in a cloth*, I mean, in thoſe Sheets of *Paper*, which that Incomparable *Prelate* RALPH BROWNRIG, late *Lord Biſhop* of *Exceter*, left to *me*, when he left the *world.*

As the man was, ſo was his ſtrength. With it You may ſee him cutting off the *heads* of the

uncir-

uncircumciſed Philiſtims, all *Regicides* and *Violatours* of *Kingly Majeſty*, forcing out of their hands thoſe dreadfull *Spears* of *Excommunication*, and *Depoſition*, whereby thoſe *Sons* of *Anak* have, under ſeveral pretentions, endeavoured to *tilt* off the *Crown* from the *Imperial* Heads of Sovereign *Kings* and *Princes*, ſo to tumble *them* and their *honours* into the *duſt* of either *Papal Uſurpation*, or *Popular Confuſion*.

If Your *Sacred Majeſty* ſhall be pleaſed to make uſe of the ſame mighty *Sword*, You will finde it to be *Rhomphæam bis acutam*, *double-edg'd*, and ſuch, as whereby You may prove *truly victorious*, nay, *more then Conquerour* over the moſt *malignant Enemies*, and *Enviers* of Your *Peace* and *Salvation*, even the great *Goliah* of *Hell*, and all his *adherents*. Of ſuch *unreſiſtible power* is the *word of God*, when diſpenſed by *skilfull* and *faithfull* Preachers; by *Preachers*, who (beſides their general, *Miniſterial* ſufficiencies) are ſanctified by an *experimental* inſight into the *great Myſterie of godlineſs*, and *well-Schooled* in the *ſecret paſſages* and *practice*, of that *high* and *ſupernatural* Science of *ſaving* Souls.

Theſe, *theſe*, are the only *Angels* upon *earth*, the *Embaſſadours* of God, His publick *Agents* in the *Church* about the *Affairs* of Heaven, and *Salvation of men*. Yea, and *theſe*, under God, will

will be the *chief ſtrength* of Your *Majeſties* Kingdoms; however they may be made the *ordinary* and *eminent Objects*, whereon *Prophaneneſs* and *Policie*, *Sacrilege* and *Superſtition*, *Hatred* to be *reformed*, and *Romiſh Conformity*, will execute the extremity of their *rage* and *paſſion*.

Theſe are the *Chariots of* Iſrael, *and the Horſe-men* thereof; as *Joaſh*, King of *Iſrael*, acknowledged *Eliſha* to be. Theſe were they, that *ſtrengthned the Kingdom of* Judah, *and made* Rehoboam *ſtrong three years*. When *Jehoſhaphat* had taken *ſpecial* and *particular* care, that there might be ſuch *preaching Miniſters* in all the *Congregations* within His *Dominions*, and had ſent His *Princes* and *Nobles* to countenance and encourage them in their *Miniſterial* employments, 'tis ſaid, that *Jehoſhaphat waxed great exceedingly*.

So ſhall Your *Sacred Majeſty*, in deſpight of *God*'s, this *Church*'s, and *Your* enemies, like *David*, *wax ſtronger and ſtronger*: They, like *Saul*, ſhall *wax weaker and weaker*; while You become at once both *Charles le Boon*, and *Charles le Grand*; which was the *Completion*, or *Summary* of Your *Royal Father*'s wiſh, who was (while he lived) the *Diamond* in the *Ring* of all the *Princes* of the World. Yea, and You ſhall approve Your ſelf to be a *Nurſing Father* indeed, if You ſhall (as You have moſt

graciouſly

graciouſly begun) go on, to promote into *Epiſcopal* and *Parochial Charges*, men enabled for *powerful* and *practical* Preaching, *eloquently* Learned, and *loyally* Religious.

The *Souls* of Your People throughout Your *Kingdoms*, will bleſs Your *Majeſty* here and hereafter, for Your *Pious* and *Princely* care in *this* particular; and *God* himſelf (whoſe *Vice-Roy* You are) will mercifully own it, as a *Real teſtification* of that *gratitude*, which is due from Your *Majeſty* to that *Almighty King of Glory* for thoſe aſtoniſhing ſucceſſions of unparallel'd deliverances, which His *Everlaſting Arms* reached out unto You, when You were in the *depth* and *deſperation* of Dangers.

My Lord, O King! You have the *Honour* (and that moſt deſervedly) to be ſtyled *A merciful King*; and I ſhall in particular proclaim *You* to be ſo, if *You* ſhall graciouſly hold out *Your Royal Scepter*, that I may touch the *top* of *it*, and ſo receive a full aſſurance, that *You freely* and *fully* pardon this bold Addreſs of

Your *Majeſtie's* moſt

Loyal Subject,

WILLIAM MARTYN.

TO THE READERS.

WHO the Authour of these Sermons was, you are not now to learn: But this you are to be informed of, that once His LORDSHIP never intended they should be made thus publick. He infinitely disliked the bold and ambitious Humour of such, as can speak nothing in the Pulpit, but presently they must with it to the Press. Yet His LORDSHIP having freely, and of His own accord, promised His Papers to me, I obtained of Him by variety and iteration of strong Importunity, leave to send some of them abroad into the World. And, I think, 'tis very well, that now they are so, that the World may know, that pious practical Preaching, and Prelatical Dignity are not inconsistent. Yea such, and so extraordinary were His Ministerial sufficiencies, as that I dare adventure to challenge all comers, and let them tell, if they can, where those Sermons are to be found, in these last vapouring and perilous times, that they can every way parallel these of this most accomplished Bishop.

Peruse them throughly, and you will finde them to be woven out of a feeling, full, and fluent Soul, by the strength of Meditation, supported and sinew'd by the true, natural, and necessary sense of the Word of life, managed with the mighty and incomparable Eloquence of the Scriptures, enforc'd with the evidence and power of an holy and humble Heart, a wise and a warm Spirit. And to a good Christian, that truly relisheth spiritual things, one such

Sermons *is more, then a world of* Declamatorie Diſcourſes, *which are works only of* memory *and* reading, *not* compoſition (*as is commonly conceived*) *of true and judicious* Learning, *ſolid and ſaving* Divinity.

I ſhall forbear to ſay any thing of this mighty Prelate; *or to tell you, He was one of the* greateſt Lights *that ever the* Church *of* ENGLAND *enjoyed, both for* ſoundneſs *of* Learning, ſincerity *of* Judgment, *and* inſight *into the* Myſteries *of* Chriſt; *but ſhall refer you to that* Character *that hath been given Him, by His* LORDSHIP's *Right Reverend, and Worthy Succeſſour,* JOHN, *now Lord* Biſhop *of* EXETER, *in that* Funeral Oration, *which he hath preſented to the World, as the* firſt Monument *of Biſhop* BROWNRIG, *who died in an* Age *leaſt worthy of his* Life, *though it much needed him.*

And yet, me thinks, I cannot hold; but muſt ſay four words, and I have done.

One *is this*; *Such was the high Eſteem, that this eminently Wiſe, Learned, Pious* Biſhop *had of our* Engliſh Liturgie, *that His* LORDSHIP *earneſtly profeſſed to me, more then once, that it could not be expected to ſee* Religion *proſper and flouriſh again amongſt us, till that excellent* Book, *ſo full of holy and humble* Prayers, *were* (*as to the ſubſtance of it*) re-eſtabliſhed, *and the uſe of it* enjoyned *in all* Churches *within His* Majeſties *Dominions.*

Another *ſhall be this*; *So great was his care to keep Himſelf cloſe to the* Texts *His* LORDSHIP *preach'd upon, that, in the compoſition of His* Sermons, *His Study and Endeavour was to bring Matter* out of *the* Text (*they were His own words*) *and not Matter* to *the* Text, *as is the manner of too many of the great and popular* Sermocinatours *of theſe looſe Times. And this,* (*among other Excellencies conſpicuous in His* LORDSHIP's Sermons) *gained that general acceptation they met with every where from the moſt pious and judicious* Auditours.

A third Word *let be this*; *In the* execution *of His* Miniſtery (*to uſe His* LORDSHIP's *own expreſſion*) *He was not wont to ſhoot over the* Heads *of His Hearers, nor yet to hit them full in the* Eyes: *but His main deſire, and endeavour was, if it were poſſible,*

to

to reach their Hearts. *Wherein His* LORDSHIP *manifeſted much ſpiritual Wiſdom, and holy Diſcretion; and withall, the ſincere and earneſt longing he had to work Remorſe, and Meditations of Repentance and Return, upon miſled and ſenſual Souls, and fairly to woe diſaffected Paſſions unto the Love and Pleaſures of the wayes of God.*

I have but one Word *more, and 'tis this; Such were His* LORDSHIP*'s ſerious preparations for Death, that three years before (among other ſecret* Paſſages, *concerning the ſtate of his own Soul, which he readily communicated to me) He was pleaſed in private to tell me, that He had made a good progreſs in that greateſt and moſt important work; and that in a ſhort time (through the grace of God) He ſhould finiſh it, and ſo would ſpend the remainder of His days in an humble and hourly expectancy of his* Diſſolution. *Whereupon we may with ſome confidence ſpeak it, His* LORDSHIP *had nothing to do, when he received the* laſt Summons *to remove from hence, but only to compoſe Himſelf to* ſleep in Jeſus, *which His* LORDSHIP *did moſt* ſweetly *and* contentedly.

O righteous Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth! *we* poor Creatures, *might have thought, if it had ſtood with Thy moſt Holy Will and Pleaſure, that it had been much better for Thy poor diſtracted* Church (*eſpecially in that juncture of time*) *if* His Life *had been ſpared, and preſerved with the loſs of many of* ours: *but Thy will was otherwiſe; to which, as beſt, we humbly ſubmit.*

O, that the Church *of God may never want ſuch a* Reverend Father, *ſuch a* wiſe Governour, *ſuch a* mighty Defender *of the Truth of our* Proteſtant Religion, *and the pure* Articles *thereof; ſuch a* powerful Preacher! *This ſhall be my great requeſt to Him, who is the* great Biſhop of our Souls. *And, I hope, there are yet many* thouſands *that will joyn in this petition with him, who is the moſt unworthy of all, that ever* ſerved at the Altar,

WILLIAM MARTYN.

TO HIS

REVEREND FRIEND

Mr. MARTYN.

REVEREND SIR,

I Should not have taken that *freedom* with your *Papers*, if you had not given me your *friendly encouragement*; or if I had not as much *confidence* of your *Ingenuity*, as I have *commendation* of your *Induſtry*, in applying your ſelf, with ſo much *pious improbity*, to thoſe *pains*, which were neceſſary to the *mature* and *meet* production of thoſe *excellent Sermons*; which, being firſt devoted to the ſervice of the *King of Kings*, are indeed worthy to be preſented to the *Majeſty* of the moſt renowned *King under Heaven*: being the *precious Remains* of that *incomparable Biſhop*, my *immediate*, *much-admired*, and *juſtly-emulated Predeceſſour*; who was *bleſſed* with the *Wit* and *Wiſdom*, the *fullneſs* and *freedom* of *true Eloquence*; not *popular* and *Profeſſorian*, but *grave* and *generous*; where neither *excellent Subjects*, nor *ſuitable Expreſſions* were wanting.

2. As I ever admired His LORDSHIP's happineſs, who enjoyed (*uberrimi ingenii beatiſſimam facundiam*) a *clear Mind*, and a *ready Tongue*; ſo I cannot but gratulate *your Honour*, in being an *inſtrument* fitted by *Providence*, and ſpecially deſigned by the *Wiſe* and *venerable Authour*, to bring forth this *divine Work* with ſuch *diſcreet diligence*, as it deſerves: That, while it *bleſſeth* the World with *rare Jewels*, theſe may be *ſet off* with all the *advantages*, which may make them *moſt welcome*; eſpecially, ſince they are capable to put us all, both *Biſhops* and *Presbyters*, to the *Bluſh*, whoever pretend to

to *preach moſt*, and *beſt*: (O, how *ill* will thoſe *evill* and *envious Eyes* bear them, who either *neglect* or *diſdain* that *Apoſtolical Duty* of *Preaching*, where God *calls* and *enables* to the *Duty*!) However *this benefit* we may *all* reap by our *juſt abaſhment*, that we ſhall henceforth enjoy ſo *noble Patterns* for our *future imitation* and *improvement*: where, ſeeing our *Defects* in His holy *Exceſſes*, we may *amend* our ſelves without any *diminution* to His *Perfections*; receiving *Light* from that which *dazleth* us, and *Luſtre* from that which *eclipſeth* us.

¶. I heartily wiſh, That the *dew of Heaven* may alwayes fall upon theſe holy *Reliques*, That ſuch a *ſpirit* may attend the *Reader*, which did the *Speaker* (which was at once *weighty* and *warm*, *profound* and *pathetick*, full of *potent Demonſtrations*, and *pregnant Perſwaſions*.) That while they are *ſeriouſly peruſed*, they may be *fully digeſted* by the *unfeined Belief*, *humble Obedience*, and *fervent Love* of thoſe *holy Truths*, thoſe *pious* and *ponderous Inſtructions*, which *ſhine* in them with ſuch a *pleaſurable profit*, of *learned Zeal* and *eloquent Devotion*; that, I confeſs, never any *Sermons*, *antient* or *modern*, more affected me, both *hearing* and *reading*, with all *variety* of *Intellectual*, *Moral*, and *Spiritual Contentments*. To me St. *Chryſoſtome* and *Chryſologus*, St. *Baſil the Great*, and *Gregory* of *Nazianzum*, ſeemed to be *revived* in this one, *acute*, *elegant*, and *Heroick Preacher*: the *richneſs* of whoſe *Vein*, ſtill *poſed* the *attentive Hearer*, as now the *Reader*, to conſider whether His *Invention* or *Judgment*, His *Elocution* or *Devotion*, His *Solidity* or *Sanctity*, were moſt to be admired in His *Preaching* or His *Writings*, who ever choſe *excellent Texts*, and ſo *handled* them: (only His *grave* and *goodly Preſence* gave a *greater Majeſty*, *Life*, and *Emphaſis* to his *Speech* and *Matter*, then can be repreſented by any *dead Letters* or *Characters*.)

¶. O Happy Church of *England*! beyond the *envy* or *obloquy* of *Superſtitious Romaniſts*, *Presbyterian Acephaliſts*, and *Independent Fanaticks*, if it might be ever *bleſs'd* with *ſuch Biſhops*; whoſe *real accompliſhments* overmatched the *firſt* in their *Learning*, the *ſecond* in their *Preaching*, the *third* in their *ſevereſt*

ſevereſt Sanctity. However they might *exceed* Him in *ſiniſter Policies, Semblances*, and *Subtilties*; yet, as to *real ſufficiencies*, none of them was ſo *preſumptious*, as to be his *Rival*: no, not in their *own Fancies*. So much did *moroſe Non-Conformity*, and *Anti-Epiſcopal fury* (the *firſt* in it's *more ſober*; the *later* in it's *Bacchinal*, or *Frantick Dreſs*) dread to appear in the *preſence*, or *enter* the *Liſts* with this *mighty Man*: then whom, no man better *diſtinguiſhed* between *true Religion*, adorn'd with *orderly decency*; and *pompus Superſtition*, loaden with *empty formality*: between *Ceremonies*, fondly *ſwelled* to the *Subſtance*, or *Diſeaſes* of *Religion*; and modeſty *waiting* upon it, as *comely ſhadows*; *inſeparable*, as our *Skins* in their *common nature*; yet *variable*, as our *Cloaths* in their *particular Faſhions* and *Diſtinctions*.

2. This *learned, judicious*, and *godly Prelate*, owned *God alone*, as the *ſole Law-giver*, and *appointer* of the *ſubſtance* of his *own Way*, and of *our Duty*: what either might *ſavingly inſtruct* the *Minde*, or *Morally move* the *Will*, or *neceſſarily binde* the *Conſcience*; God *alone* knowing what will *beſt pleaſe* Himſelf, and *moſt profit* us. Hence no man was a greater *Vindicatour* and *Veneratour* of the *Holy Scriptures*, againſt *Romiſh Innovations*, and *Fanatick Deluſions* in *Opinion* and *Practice*; which were either *contrary* to the *Tenour* of the *Scripture-Rules*, or *deviating* from the *Catholick Cuſtom* of the *Church* of *Chriſt*, *conſonant* thereunto.

3. On the other ſide, no man more *aſſerted* the *Prudence*, *Liberty*, and *Authority* of *this* (as all *Churches*) within their *reſpective Polities* and *Communions*, to *chooſe* and *uſe*, yea, to *preſcribe* and *impoſe* upon *themſelves*, by *publick conſent*, ſuch particular *Forms* and *Modes* of *external Solemnity, Order, Reverence*, and *Decency*, as he believed was allowed them by the *Word of God*: and no leſs certainly, in *Publick Worſhip* left to the *publick Wiſdom*, and *Sovereign Power* in *Church* and *State*; then is in *private Cloſets* and *Families*, permitted to every *ſingle Perſon*, or *domeſtick Governour*, to whoſe *diſcretion Time*, and *Place, Manner, Meaſure, Veſture, Geſture*, and the like *outward modifications* of *Duties* are left by the *Indulgence* of *God*, under that *general* Direction, *Let all things be done decently and*

in

in order; without any *preciſe* command, *limiting* or *enjoyning*, *all* or *any* Churches, in thoſe *Circumſtantials* and *Ceremonials* of *Religion*: Provided, they agree with *common Civility*, and *Chriſtian Charity*; neither againſt *Faith*, nor *Holineſs*. He thought *Ceremonies* to be only as the *garniſh* of the *Diſh*; neither the *Meat*, nor the *Sawce* of *Religion*.

§. Not, that this *wiſe* and *learned Biſhop* (with whom I have oft *diſcourſed* about *theſe* things) did think, that the *Liberty* and *Authority* of the *Church* had any *power*, by its *determination*, as to any *particular uſe*, and *uniformity* of theſe *Circumſtances* and *Ceremonies*, in the *publick* and *ſolemn* exerciſe of *Religion*, to change the *nature* of them, or to *impoſe* them as *holy*, *neceſſary*, and *immutable*, upon the *Judgments*, *Conſciences*, and *Practice* of *Chriſtian* People, as by any *intrinſecal*, *antecedent*, or *divine neceſſity* in them; which were a *falſity* and *deluſion* not to be impoſed on the *minds* of people, and conſequently both the *impoſition*, and *uſe*, or *practice* of them, under that *notion*, would be *erroneous*, *ſuperſtitious*, and *irreligious*: But the *Church fully* and *freely* declaring (as the *Reformed Church* of ENGLAND hath oft done) according to *Truth* and *Charity*, it's *eſteem* of the *nature* and *uſe* of ſuch things: *Firſt*, as *free* in themſelves: *Secondly*, as *no eſſentials* of *Worſhip*, or *neceſſary Ingredients* to the *ſervice* of *God*, by any *Divine Command*: *Thirdly*, as no way *myſterious* or *religious*, by any *ſignificancy*, as importing or conferring *ſpecial Grace* (which nothing of *outward Sign* can properly *ſignifie*, *imply*, or *convey*; unleſs it hath a *Divine Precept* and *Promiſe*: *God* only *inſtituting* the *means* or *ſigns*, who can *give* the *Grace*) *Fourthly*, as left *at large* by *God* to the *prudence* of *every Church* to *chooſe*, and *uſe* them, as it ſees *moſt expedient*; *ſignifying* and *importing* nothing more in their *uſe* and *injunction*, then the *divine Indulgence* to *Chriſtians* beyond the *Jews*, in point of *Ceremonial exactneſs*, and ſo the *Churches Liberty* and *Authority* in theſe things: and, *Laſtly*, the *Duty* of every *particular Chriſtian*, according to their *relations* and *obligations* to ſeveral *Churches*, not to *change* their *Minds*, as to the *nature* of ſuch things; but yet *humbly* to be *ſubject*, and *actually* to *obey* their *Superiours* in theſe things *for the Lord's ſake*; according

cording to that *Humility*, *Charity*, and *Peaceableneſs*, which conſiſts with *true Wiſdom* and *Holineſs*, and which is by God *required* of every *Member* in thoſe *holy Bodies*. The *nature* then of *theſe* things He judged ſtill (as it *truly* is) *free*, in point of any *neceſsity*, having no *Divine Injunction*: but the *uſe* of them he thought no longer *free*, during the *Church*'s *choice*, *conſent*, and *command*; whereto our *peaceable Obedience* and *orderly ſubjection* in ſuch things, is *founded* upon both *right Reaſon* and the *general Rules* of *Religion* in *God's Word*, as to the *outward Order*, *Polity*, *Peaceableneſs*, *Decency*, and *Conformity* to ſuch *Cuſtoms* and *Canons Eccleſiaſtical*, as are *enjoyned* by *Supreme Authority*, and *approved* by the *wiſdom* of the *whole Church*, as to its *own parts* and *precincts*, without any *prejudice* to other *Churches*.

§. With this *calmneſs* and *clearneſs*, was this *holy Biſhop* wont to *ſtate* thoſe *popular* and *petty Diſputes* about *Circumſtances* and *Ceremonies*. As to the *Liturgie* of the *Church* of *England*, you have, with me, ſet forth his *Judgment*, full of *honour* and *eſteem*; not, that he was a *rigid Verbaliſt*, as to *Words* and *Phraſes*, (which, as the *Barks* and *Leaves* of *Trees*, may *change* with *age* and *time*, while the *Tree* is the *ſame*:) but, as to the *Matter* and *Method* of it, he ever *highly approved* it, as very apt for the *Divine Offices*, for the *Peoples edification* and *union*. I am prone to believe, the *Church* of ENGLAND might have had its *peace* at a far *cheaper rate*, then now it is like to *gain* it, if this *Great* and *Good Man* had lived to have *over-awed* the *petulancy*, and *confuted* the *popular Sophiſtry* of ſome *rigid* and *endleſs Diſputers*, who, of all *Arts*, are hardeſt to learn that of *ingenuous Retractation* and *ſober Retreats*, from their former *Errors* and *Tranſports*. Nor can you wonder at their *reſtiveneſs* (even after ſome *variations* are conſented to; yea, after *God's confutation* of their *prepoſterous preſumptions*) when you *conſider* how much many of them are engaged in point of *Reputation*, and how *dear* that is to *men*, who weigh their *Credit* with their *Conſciences*; yea, and put it in to the *Scales* againſt the *publick peace* of *Church* and *State*, which, next *God's glory*, and our *Souls ſalvation*, ſhould be *deareſt* to every *honeſt* and *good Chriſtian*.

§. I cannot but *deplore* with you, and all *moderate* men (yet with *ſubmiſſion* to the *Divine Will*) the *ineſtimable*, and (if I may ſay ſo, *after the manner of men*) the *unſeaſonable loſs* of this *excellent* Biſhop; who departed out of the *Chaos* and *midnight* of our *Engliſh* World, juſt as the *Day* of our *Reſtitution* began to *dawn*; when *horrid Rebellion, Uſurpation*, and *Sacriledge*, had run themſelves *out of breath*, and *off their legs*, into an *Egyptian Miſt* of *horrible Darkneſs*, and *Bog* of *Confuſion*, after a *long*, *tedious*, *giddy*, *cruel*, and *moſt deformed* purſuit after *Reformation* in *Church* and *State*; for ſo it was at firſt *pretended* by all the *Actours* in our manifold *Tragedies*; till *Hypocriſie* growing as *impudent*, as *impious*, caſt off its *Viſors*, when it had got the *Sword* into its *Hand*.

§. No man better knew the *juſt Standard* of *Religion*, and all *Church-Affairs*, then this *learned* and *Religious Biſhop* did; both for *Doctrine*, *Devotion* and *Diſcipline*, for *Faith* and *Manners*, for *Truth* and *Peace*, for *Sanctity* and *Solemnity*, for *good Order* and *Government*, for *Edification* and *Decency*. No man better *underſtood* what was *beſt*; nor better *expreſſed* what he well *underſtood*. No man was *abler* to *give* good *Counſel*, or *readier* to *obey* good *Laws*. No man more *zealous* for *juſt* and *ſober Reformations*, where any *decayes* were owned by *publick Wiſdom*, and *Supreme Authority*, or evidenced by *private humble Remonſtrances* from *God's Word*, and the *Laws* in *force*: becauſe he knew *Religion* to be, as a very *weighty*, ſo a very *tender Buſineſs*, the *great concern* of *that God* who is at once *jealous* for his *own Glory*, and *ſolicitous* for *Man's Salvation*. Nor may either the *Traditions* and *Infirmities* of *Men*, or the *Prejudices* and *Preſumptions* of *Time*, *contend* with *God's Word*, or *hinder* the great deſigns of *true Religion*; which cannot be carryed on, but in *Conformity* to the *Word* of *God*, which commands, as our *exact obedience* to *Divine Precepts* and *Inſtitutions*, in point of *Truth* and *Holineſs*; ſo our *ſubmiſſion* to the *Churches orderly appointments*, in point of *Peace* and *Decency*, as to things of *indifferency*, that are not *punctually enjoyned* or *forbidden* by the *Word* of *God*.

§. Hence it was, that no man (on the other ſide) was a more *ſevere reprover* and *condemner*, of thoſe *private* and

pragmatick

pragmatick Spirits, which were *prone* rudely to *obtrude* either their *Fancies*, or their *affronts* and *contumelies*, upon the *publick Liberty* and *Authority* of the *Church*; meerly upon this *presumption*, that they think *themselves*, and their *petty Parties*, wiser then *Church* and *State*, *Kings*, *Parliaments*: as if the *majority* of the *Church* and *Nation*, could do nothing *well*, till they either *ask counsel* of these *new Masters*, or *get leave* of these *grand Dictators*, to *execute* what *free Parliaments* have *enacted*, and *National Synods* have *advised* as *best* for *publick Piety* and *Peace*.

¶. The truth is, no *Bishop* of *late years* (since those *admirable Prelates*, USHER, MORTON, and HALL) hath made a *greater Breach* in the *stability*, *honour*, *health*, and *safety* of the *Hierarchie* of the *Church* of ENGLAND, by their *deaths*, then this *ample Person*; who had *equal strength*, *courage*, and *dexterity* to do all things, which *became* a good *Man*, a good *Christian*, a good *Minister*, and a good *Bishop*. The first *repair* for this *great loss* the *Church* will owe to your *pains*, who restore to us *something*, yea, *much* of his *divine Soul* and *Genius* in his SERMONS. I pray God, His, and those other *Bishops* personal *absence* may be so *supplyed* by us, their *Successours*, that no great *vacancy*, or *defect* may appear, as to their *Learning*, or *Living*; their *Piety*, or *Charity*; their *Preaching*, or *Ruling*: so far as *God* gives us *ability*, and the *Law authority*:

¶. For *my* particular (who am under a *double affliction*; First, to have *lost* so excellent a *Friend* and *Father*: next, to *succeed* him both in the TEMPLE, and the *Dioceſs* of EXETER, with so great *disproportions* to his *Worth*) yet amidst my *private dejections*, and *publick dissatisfactions*, I confess, I have still some *welcome reflections* in reference to this *excellent Bishop*. First, I *joy* to have lived in the *Age* when this *grand Example* lived; as *Plato* did, that he was *coetaneous* with *Socrates*; who made *Virtue visible* and *usefull* to the *World*. Next, I remember, with great *content*, that particular *favour* and *friendship*, which for many years I was *blessed* with, from this most *affable* and *courteous Bishop*; whom no *Honour leavened*, no *Diminution debased*. Lastly, I

rejoyce, not only to have *perused* His *Manuscrips* (or Αὐτόγραφα) which I had *some Moneths* with me; but now also to read His *elaborate Works* in this *exact Edition*, which your *meritorious diligence* hath *adorned*. For which the *better World* will greatly *thank* you; though the *worser*, having *most need* of them, hath *most cause* so to do: for if any Man, since the *Apostles*, were able to *cast out* the most *profane*, *petulant*, and *pertinacious Devils*, this great *Apollos*, this mighty *Prelate* and *Preacher*, both in *word* and *deed*, would have done it, while he was *living*, both in the *sanctity* and *severity* of His *private Conversation* (set off with all *serenity* and *sweetness*) and most of all, by the *Thunder* and *Lightning* of His *Preaching*; where no man was so *blinde*, as not to *see* the *light* of His *Reasonings*; no man so *hard* or *stupid*, as not to *feel* the *strokes* of His *Impressions*: nor do I doubt of *parallel effects* (with God's blessing) to be wrought by these *holy printed Charms*, wherewith you have enabled him to *speak being now dead*. For which commendable *industrie* and *charity*, that your *reward* (as His now is) may be from the *most High God*, as well as from His *great Vice-gerent*, our most gracious *Sovereign* (a *King* of so many *Prayers*, *Mercies*, and *Miracles*) is the *hearty desire* of,

JUNE 12.
1661.

SIR,

Your loving *Friend*, *Fellow-Servant*, and *Brother* in *Christ*,

JOHN EXON.

An

An ADVERTISEMENT.

TO *prevent all* Miſtakes, *in ſo publick a* Concern, *as the* genuine Works *of the* Right Reverend Father *in* God, RALPH BROWNRIG, *late* Lord Biſhop *of* Exceter, (*my moſt worthy* Friend, *and immediate* Predeceſſour) *the peruſal whereof* (*ſo far as they then could be got together*) *was by Mr.* Thomas Buck (*His* Lordſhip's *ſole* Executor) *committed to me: Theſe are to teſtifie, that theſe* Sermons, *written by His* Lordſhip's *own* Hand, *and peruſed by* Me, *were delivered to Mr.* William Martyn, *according to His* Lordſhip's *deſign and deſire, in order to have them* publiſhed, *as now they are; nor do I know of any other to be own'd, as* authentick *and* complete.

JOHN GAUDEN, Bp. of EXCETER.

It

IT pleaſed the *Right-Reverend Father* in God, *RALPH BROWNRIG*, late *Lord Biſhop* of *EXCETER*, by particular Direction, under His LORDSHIP's own *Hand* to Mr. *Thomas Buck* (His LORDSHIP's ſole *Executour*) to diſpoſe of all His *Sermons*, *Notes* of *Sermons*, *Papers*, *Paper-Books*, to me *William Martyn*, with liberty to *Print* what I ſhould think good. Theſe are therefore to give notice, that if any have *borrowed*, or by any other means have *obtained*, any of his LORDSHIP's *Sermons*, *Notes* of *Sermons*, *Papers*, or *Paper-Books*, wherein any of His LORDSHIP's *Works* or *Exerciſes* are contained, that they are (of right) to reſtore them into my *Hands*; and hereby are deſired to leave them, for me, with Mr. *John Martyn*, *Stationer*, at the *Bell* in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, to be diſpoſed of by me, as His LORDSHIP directed me.

Here in this *Volume* are ſuch *Sermons* of His LORDSHIP's, as the *Right-Reverend Father* in God, *JOHN GAUDEN*, now *Lord Biſhop* of *EXCETER*, hath *peruſed* and *approved* of. And nothing hereafter ſhall be made *publick* by me under the Name of *Biſhop BROWNRIG*, but what ſhall be firſt *commended* to the view of His aforeſaid *Reverend* and *Worthy Succeſſour*.

If therefore any whoſoever ſhall adventure to put forth any thing, as *Biſhop BROWNRIG's*, beſides my ſelf, 'tis to be accounted either *fraudulently* gotten, or out of *imperfect Copies*, and may prove a great *diſhonour* to the aforeſaid moſt *Learned* and *Reverend Biſhop*, and very *injurious*, not only to me, but to thoſe that ſhall *buy* it.

You will eaſily believe this, if you will *compare* that *ſingle Sermon* lately thruſt forth under *Biſhop BROWNRIG's* Name, concerning *Zerubbabel*, with that, that is preſented to the *World* by

WILLIAM MARTYN.

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Ex Æd. Lamb.
Octob. 4. 1664.

TWO

SERMONS

PREACHED

Upon the ANNIVERSARY SOLEMNITY

OF

The Happy *INAUGURATION*

OF

Our Dread SOVEREIGN Lord

KING

CHARLES the I.

Ex Libris
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ON King CHARLES the First's INAUGURATION.

The First Sermon.

II. SAMUEL vi. 12.

And it was told King David, *saying, The* LORD *hath blessed the house of* Obed-Edom, *and all that* pertaineth *unto him, because of the Ark of God.*

THE course of this Story, that we have entred upon, relates to us a memorable Passage in the beginning of King *David*'s Reign; his religious care for God's publick Worship, to reduce the *Ark of God*, and to bring it, and set it near unto himself in the head of *Jerusalem*.

D It had been detained from God's People for a time in the Country of the *Philistines*. Thence miraculously it made way for it self, breaking out of that Country by many Judgments, to return into *Israel*.

First it came to *Beth-Shemesh*; then (as works of Religion go on but slowly, and meet with many Interruptions) it sojourned in the house of *Abinadab*: from whence *David* intends to bring it up Triumphantly. But *Uzzah*, failing in some part of his duty, and a sad judgment befalling him, *David* was glad to be rid of such an hazardous E business, is afraid to entertain so dangerous a Ghuest, gives over the bringing of the *Ark* any further, and turns the burden upon *Obed-Edom* a *Levite*, lodges the *Ark of God* in his house.

It lets us see the flitting condition, that Religion, and God's Church, hath here in this World. It hath its dwelling *in Templo deambulatorio*, (as St. *Augustine* speaks of the *Jews* Tabernacle.) First, after much ado, it hath its abode in *Israel*; then the Impiety of the People, and

Sermon I.

the Prophaneſs of the Prieſts, *Hophni* and *Phinees*, their lewd lives, forfeit the *Ark* to the Enemies of God: the *Ark* is taken, and carryed captive into the land of the *Philiſtines*, Religion trod under foot, driven into Exile. Then, God looks upon his Church, turns their Captivity, reſtores his Ark to His People, after He had revenged the Quarrel of his Covenant. And yet again, ſtrange Varieties, and Hinderances to the eſtabliſhing of it. Firſt, the *Beth-Shemites* prophane it, and a Judgment befals them; then 'tis thruſt into a private houſe. Now *David* bethinks himſelf, begins to advance it; yet again a new ſtop is put to Religion, it muſt ſojourn with *Obed-Edom*. See the Ebbings, and Wanings of the Church, and Religion. We cannot clip the wings of Truth, and entail it to our ſelves by an indefeazable Tenure; we may forfeit it, and ſee it taken from us, and carryed into a ſtrange land; and when God returns it to us, yet our backwardneſs to receive it, and the cold welcome we give to it, may be a ſecond provocation. A B

For the Words themſelves, they are joyful Tidings brought to King *David* of the welfare, and proſperity of the Church of God; the welcome News of a great bleſſing, that Religion, and the Worſhip of God had begun in his Kingdom. Tidings, then which nothing more acceptable to this devout King. His firſt, and his greateſt care was for the ſervice of God, to advance that, and the Servitours of it: *Lord, remember* David *and all his affliction.* The finding out a reſting-place for the *Ark of God* was a thought went near unto him: he afflicted his Soul with care, and anxiety, how to affect it: *He ſware unto the Lord, and vowed it to the mighty God of* Jacob; it brake his ſleep, interrupted his comforts, he envyed himſelf his own Princely Palace, till the *Ark* was provided for. C

A Text, I ſuppoſe proper, and pertinent, and (through the bleſſing of God upon us) ſeaſonable, and ſuitable to this dayes Solemnity. And, if it had fallen into the hands of one, whom leiſure, and other enablement, had fitted for this ſervice, it might have afforded plenty of matter for an holy *Panegyrick*. D

Indeed, upon a particular ſurvey of the Words, we may clearly diſcover an exact frame, and model of a bleſſed Kingdom; the main Ingredients, that concur to the happineſs of a Nation, meet here in the Text. *Plato* fancied the Form of a good Common-wealth; *Xenophon* of a good King: Here, in this Hiſtory, we may behold *non compoſitam figuram, ſed expreſſam virtutem*, as St. *Ambroſe* ſpeaks. We have that really performed, which they fancied and imagined.

Firſt, Here is a Nation bleſſed in the truth of Religion, and the Worſhip of God. What's the advantage and prerogative of a people? Chiefly, *that the Oracles of God are committed to them.* Here they have the Ark, and Tabernacle of God ſetled amongſt them. E

Secondly, Here is a Nation bleſſed in a pious, and proſperous Clergy, the Miniſters, and Servants of that Religion. Here is *Obed-Edom* takes care of God's Ark, and it brings a bleſſing on him.

Thirdly,

A Thirdly, Here is a Nation bleſſed in a religious, and well-affected Laity, and People; ſuch, as take notice of the welfare of Religion, of the proſperity of the Prieſthood, and take comfort in it

Fourthly, Here is a Nation bleſſed in a devout, and religious King. This crowns all the other bleſſings, and makes them compleat; a King that gladly hears of the flouriſhing, and proſperity of Religion in his Kingdom, and of thoſe that attend it.

Firſt, Here is no *Dagon*, or *Calves of Bethel*, no *Idol of abomination in the Holy-place*; but the *Ark of God* in his ſeat, and Sanctuary.

Secondly, Here are no Prieſts of *Jeroboam*, irregular, baſe, and beg-
B gerly Attendants upon the *Ark of God*; but the Sons of *Levi*, religious in their Service, and proſperous in their Religion. King *Abijah* thought it no ſmall aſſurance to his Kingdom againſt *Jeroboam*, that he had a lawful, and honourable Prieſt-hood; *The Sons of* Aaron *and the* Levites *are with us, that wait upon God's ſervice:* he promiſed himſelf Victory upon that aſſurance, and he did obtain it, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 10.

Thirdly, Here is no *Doeg* to inform againſt the Church, and Clergy; no *Tobijah*, or *Sanballat*, maligning the welfare of it, and *traducing* it to the King by any railing accuſation; but ſuch as wiſh
C well to the Miniſters of the *Ark*, rejoyce, and delight in the *Levites* proſperity.

Fourthly, Here is no perſecuting *Ahab*, oppreſſing the Church, ſlaughtering, and ſucking the blood of God's Prophets; no profane *Gallio*, that can ſee St. *Paul* ſtruck in his preſence, and makes nothing of it: But a religious *David*, that cheriſhes the Prieſthood, and ſeeks to do good to it, and wiſhes them good luck in the Name of the Lord.

To come to the words of my Text. They give forth a report of that ſucceſs, which *Obed-Edom* found in entertaining the *Ark*. And in them
D obſerve theſe two particulars:

Firſt, The Succeſs it ſelf, that befel *Obed-Edom*, *The Lord bleſſed the houſe of* Obed-Edom, *and all that* pertained *to him, becauſe of the Ark of God.*

Secondly, The notice and obſervation, that's made of this ſucceſs, *It was told King* David.

Firſt is the Succeſs, that *Obed-Edom* found, and in it we meet with four things obſervable:

Firſt, Is the nature and quality of this Succeſs; it is *a Bleſſing.*

Secondly, Is the kind of this Bleſſing; it was an outward, viſible,
E temporal bleſſing, the *bleſſing of proſperity.*

Thirdly, Is the latitude and extent of this bleſſing, how far it reached; 'tis large and comprehenſive; it extends to *Obed-Edom, his houſe, and all that pertain to him.*

Fourthly, Is the reaſon and motive, that God had reſpect to that, which procured and brought down this bleſſing; It was *becauſe of the Ark of God.*

Firſt,

Sermon I.

First, The first thing considerable is the Nature of this Success, it was *a Blessing*. If we reflect upon the former Passages of the *Ark of God*, we shall find contrary effects to this in my Text. It brought not a blessing upon all places, and persons that had to do with it. Upon the *Philistines* it brought a curse, they were smote with sore Diseases, *the hand of God was heavy upon the Philistines, and he destroyed them*; 1 *Sam.* v. 6. Upon the men of *Beth-Shemesh* it brought an heavy, and dreadful Judgment; *five thousand of them slain for the Ark of God.* Upon *Uzzah*, and his Father *Abinadab*, it brought a great Calamity; *Uzzah was struck dead before the Ark of God.* Now, here, upon *Obed-Edom* it brings *a blessing*. Where-ever it came, they were either the better, or the worse for it; it either blessed them, or cursed them. A B

Observe it; The *Ark of God*, and the entertainment of it amongst us, is no indifferent thing; the presence, and profession of Religion, and our approach unto it, is not a matter of *slight consequence*: A person, or people are either the better, or the worse for it: 'tis either effectual to procure a blessing, or to fasten some curse, or judgment upon them.

When God sends His Ark to us, pitches His Tabernacle, and dwels amongst us, it deeply concerns us to look about us. Sure God intends some great thing towards us; He is bringing some great mercy or judgment upon us. When *Samuel* came to *Beth-lehem*, 'tis said, *All the Elders of the Town trembled at his coming, and were perplexed.* They knew he came not for naught; the presence of the Prophet did abode some great matter to them, for good or evil. 'Tis so with God; when He comes amongst us, sends to us the Ark of His presence, it concerns us to look to our selves: He comes as a faithful friend, or as a deadly foe, to us. C

Thus God fore-warned his People, when he sent his Angel amongst them, the Type of Christ, *Exod.* xxiii. 20. *Behold, I send an Angel before thee, beware of him, and obey his voyce, provoke him not*; he will prove either a saving, or a destroying Angel. God's Messengers come to a People, like his Angels to *Sodom*, not barely to lodge there, and rest themselves; but to work some great work there, either to save or to destroy that Nation. God counts it an high indignity, an argument of prophane Security, to think *He will neither do good nor ill*, Zeph. i. 12. *Isaiah* compares the sending of his Word to us to the Rain that waters the Earth: it comes not in vain, but *accomplishes that, for which it is sent*; it brings up either wholesome herbs, or noysome weeds; furthers our *Salvation*, or hastens our *Destruction*. D

The Gospel, 'tis no still, easie, gentle thing; it works strongly some way; 'tis either a *savour of life*, or a *savour of death*. 'Tis not like some Drug that Apothecaries will venture on, if it will do no good, it will do no hurt: but like strong Physick, it will either mend us, or end us. What St. *Paul* saith of our coming to the Sacrament, is true of all our Addresses to God, in any part of his service: We come together εἰς τὸ κρεῖττον, or εἰς τὸ ἧττον: *For the better*, or *for the worse*. The *Ark* where ever E

A ever it comes, makes the place it reſt on, an *Hebal*, or a *Gerazim*, a place of *bleſſings*; or a place of *curſes*. 'Tis fatal to a Nation, as 'twas to *Capernaum*; it lifts it nearer unto *Heaven*, or throws it lower into Hell, Matth. xi. 23.

Well, to *Obed-Edom* it brings *a Bleſſing*: and that implyes two things:

I. A *gracious acceptation* of *Obed-Edom*'s ſervice.

II. A *bounteous remuneration*, and *requital* of it.

I. Here is a *gracious acceptation*; God takes graciouſly whatſoever ſervice we perform to the advancement of his Religion; any
B ſupply we make to the furtherance of his Worſhip, finds a loving acceptance. Pride, and Contempt amongſt men, often ſlights the proffers of our love, eſpecially if mean; but God caſts a gracious eye upon any well-meant Duties, that are thus tendered to him. *David* had but a purpoſe to build an Houſe to God, how lovingly doth God take notice of it? He diſpatches an *Embaſſador* to him, ſends *Nathan* to tell him how well he took it, 2 *Chron.* vi. 8.

Nay, not only *magnificent Intendments*, but the ſmalleſt and *pooreſt Helps* are prized and accepted. Not only the rich Contributions of
C Gold and Silver; but they that brought Skins, and Leather, and Hair-Cloth for the Tabernacle were accepted, and remembred. The Widows two Mites, caſt into Gods Treaſury, how honourable are they valued by Chriſt himſelf? How many Queens are forgoten, when this poor Woman is put upon record for all Eternity? *Whereſoever this Goſpel ſhall be preached, this, that ſhe hath done, ſhall be ſpoken of her.* The meaneſt good deed to Chriſt, and his Church, hath a Patent of Eternity. A little *Manna*, but a vaniſhing *Meteor*, lay it up in the *Ark*, it never putrifies; the cheapeſt Contributions to the Worſhip of God ſhall endure perpetually.

See this gracious acceptance of Gods in the Law of Sacrifices,
D *Levit.* i. 17. Rich men were to offer *Bulls*, and *Rams*: but the Poor man cannot reach to that charge, and expence; *a pair of young Pigeons* were his richeſt Sacrifice. What ſaith God of that offering; how doth he accept it? *verſe* 17. *'Tis a burnt-offering of a ſweet ſavour unto the Lord.* As Chriſt ſpeaks of *two Sparrows*; ſo are not *two young Pigeons* ſold for a ſmall price? Yet ſo mean an Offering is not forgotten before God: Yea the very Goates-hairs are numbred, and valued by him.

II. Here is a real *retribution*, and *remuneration*. *Quorum acceptator Deus, eorum & remunerator*, ſaith *Tertullian*. He puts not off *Obed-*
E *Edom* with empty favours, and kind acceptance; but leaves *a bleſſing* upon him. *Obed-Edom* had been at *coſt* with God's *Ark*; ſee here, God defrayes the charges, payes him abundantly for his entertainment. *Evangelium non eſt aſymbolus hoſpes.* The Goſpel never lodges with us on free-coſt. There was never any man loſt by God, and his ſervice; never any man gave him, his Worſhip, his Ark entertainment, but he reaped *a bleſſing* by it. *Abraham*, he entertains God's *Angels*, the Promiſe

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Promiſe of *Iſaac* was then ſealed up to him. *Lot* received, and harboured thoſe *Meſſengers* of Heaven, and a miraculous deliverance was granted to him. The *Sareptan* Widow was at coſt with *Elijah*; what a reward had ſhe for it? Who got moſt by that Welcom? *Elijah*, or She? *Viduæ fecit, non Eliæ*, ſaith St. *Auguſtin*. The main bleſſing was upon the poor Widow. The bleſſing that *Eli* pronounces upon *Elkanah* for dedicating his Son to the ſervice of the Tabernacle, belongs to any ſervice we bo to God's *Ark*, and *Worſhip*; *The Lord give thee Children* (encreaſe, and multiply thee) *for the Loan thou haſt lent unto the Lord*, 1 Sam. ii. 20. Doſt thou tender up any thing to advance God's ſervice? 'tis not loſt, or given, but a loan to the Lord. Τὸ δᾶγον, 'tis τὸ δάνεισμα, ſaith St. *Baſil*; He pays Uſe, and Principal, and in the higheſt proportion; not *centeſimum*, but *centuplum*, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*, even an hundred-fold.

How ſhould it encourage us to invite this *Ark* of God, and give entertainment to it? like *Jael* to ſet open our Tent to him, *Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me*; as *Lydia* importuned St. *Paul*, *If ye have counted me faithfull, enter into my houſe*, καὶ παρεβιάσατο ἡμᾶς, *and ſhe compelled* them.

But it will breed trouble, and charges, and loſs of Time in this ſolemn attendance. What then? *Obed-Edom* forecaſts all this, the *Ark* would bring buſineſs, and charge, and it concerned him to look to his Life too, now God was ſo near him. Well, he knows he ſhall not loſe by it, the Lord will pay him for the Loan he lends him; both Uſe and Principal ſhall be returned to him.

There was a ſuperſtitious Opinion maintained by ſome Fryers in *Gerſon*'s time, that *A man never waxed older for the time he ſpent at hearing of* Maſs; *Nemo ſeneſcit pro tempore, quo quis* Miſſam *audit*. He condemns, and confutes it. But ſure, it hath this true Moral; the *time*, the coſt, and charges we are at for the *Worſhip* of God, brings not the leaſt loſs to us, but a great advantage. And God aſſures us of it. See how he encourages the maintaining, and furniſhing His Houſe with ſupplies; Mal. iii. 10. *Bring all the Tythes into the ſtore-houſe, that there may be meat in my houſe, and prove me, ſaith the* LORD, *if I open not the windows of Heaven and pour you out a bleſſing*. Thus *Solomon* the builder of God's Houſe adviſes us, Prov. iii. 9. *Honour the* LORD *with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt-fruits of thy encreaſe*. I, but that's chargeable: and we love *alife* to ſerve God without coſt. That Religion is beſt that's beſt-cheap. Mark the recompenſe of God's bleſſing upon it, verſ. 10. *So ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty*. As *Tertullian* truly, *Quantiscunque ſumptibus conſtat, ſacrum eſt Pietatis nomine ſumptum facere*.

That's the firſt particular; the Nature of the *ſucceſs*, 'twas *a Bleſſing*.

Secondly, A ſecond thing obſervable, is the kind of this Bleſſing. 'Twas an outward, and temporal bleſſing; the bleſſing of *proſperity* upon his *perſon*, and *poſſeſſion*. No doubt his zeal, and care for God's Worſhip

A Worſhip and ſervice, ſtored him with ſpiritual and eternal Bleſſings. That's the main reward, and wages of a *Levite*. *Indè Paſtores expectant mercedem, unde Populus ſalutem*; ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. *The world* (ſaith *Luther*) *is not worthy to reward a good deed*; *much leſs this ſacred work of ſerving God's Ark*. We may expect here *ſuſtentationem neceſſitatis à populo*; but *mercedem diſpenſationis à Domino*, ſaith the Father. *Obed-Edom*'s great reward, is *mercy with the Lord at that day*, as St. *Paul* prays for *Oneſiphorus*, that harboured, and refreſhed him.

And yet we ſee the bleſsing vouchſafed, and expreſſed in the Text,
B is *outward* and *temporal*:

I. 'Tis an *uſual Bleſsing*.

II. 'Tis a *ſuitable* and *congruous Bleſsing*.

I. In general, *temporal Bleſsings* are the uſual rewards of Piety and Religion: all temporal good things they belong unto it:

1. In God's Original purpoſe and intendment. The bleſsings of this World are purpoſed by God, as Appurtenances to his Worſhip. The World was made for the Church, and all the Plenty of it are Appendants to it. *Plato* could tell us, that *The World is continued by daily ſucceſsions, that there may be a people, that may worſhip God in it*. He
C hath enriched and furniſhed His Church *cum mundi dote*, as the Father ſpeaks. The World is as the Dowry of the Church, as the Glebe of Religion. 'Tis the higheſt honour theſe outward things can have, to be thus employed to ſupport God's ſervice. *Ariſtotle* laughs at *Protarchus* for ſaying, *Eos lapides fortunatos eſſe, ex quibus Altaria exſtructa ſunt*. Sure, 'tis the felicity of the Creatures, when they are made to accommodate God's ſervice and Worſhip.

Hence we ſee, the Finiſhing of the Church gives Date to the World. When that's accompliſhed, the World ſhall ceaſe. At that day the Stars ſhall fall, like Leaves from a *Fig-tree*, ſaith our *Saviour*. *When the fruit is gathered*, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*, *then the Leaves*
D *fall*; *when the Church is collected and fully finiſhed, the Creatures ſhall fade, and fall away preſently*.

2. None other have ſo ſpecial a promiſe of *temporal Bleſsings*, as thoſe that belong to this *Ark*, and are homagers to it. 'Tis *Piety* only that hath the *Promiſes*. A *Prophane* man, that regards not this Worſhip, may make a ſhift to proſper; but 'tis at all adventures. The Servants of God's *Ark* have a more ſpecial claim ro it. Nay, the neglect of the *Ark* forfeits all. As Tenants, that refuſe to do their homage, to perform ſuit and ſervice, that will not pay their Land's
E rent, forfeit their Eſtates, make them liable to *ſeiſure*: *My ſervants ſhall eat* (ſaith God in *Eſay*) *but ye ſhall be hungry*: *My ſervants ſhall drink*; *but ye ſhall be thirſty*. The Proviſions are for the Houſhold; that they may have bread enough.

3. The *practice* proves it, that even *temporal Bleſsings* are annexed by God's ordination to His Service, and Worſhip. *Noah*, and his holy portion, reſerved for the Bleſſings of the World; when pro-

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phane ones were deſtroyed. The *Patriarchs* had the bleſſings of this life, upon this Conveyance made Heirs of the World. The Common-wealth of *Iſrael* then proſpered, when Religion proſpered. Search the *Chronicles* and *Annals* of the Kings of *Iſrael*, the times when Religion was advanced were proſperous times. In *David*'s and *Solomon*'s reigns, how did Holineſs and Happineſs meet together? Piety and Proſperity kiſſed each other. Under *Aſa*, and *Jehoſhaphat*, and *Hezekiah*, things went well in the Land. And their Apoſtaſie from this *Ark* forfeited all, and God took the forfeiture. A

They choſe unto themſelves new Gods, then was War in the gates; Judg. v. 8. That's the grand Impiety, that bred all their miſery. *They choſe new Gods.* B

(1.) They muſt have *many* Gods, whereas God ſhould be one, and his Name ſhould be one, *Zech.* xiv. 9.

(2.) And *new* Gods. Novelty, 'tis a contradiction to a Deity. *Quis novus Deus, niſi falſus?* Any *innovation* in Religion is odious, and dangerous. *Quod utilitate prodeſt, novitate perturbat*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. But a *new God?* 'tis an impoſsible contradiction. *God* can neither be old, nor new; *Novus Deus non fuit, Vetus Deus non erit*, ſaith *Tertullian*. Both bad; but, of the two, the *new God* is more ſuſpicious.

(3.) And then *they choſe new Gods*; that aggravates their Apoſtaſie. C Had they been impoſed, or enforced upon them by the power of an Enemy, it had been a leſs impiety; but wantonly to dote upon another God, to loath their own God, and to long for a new, 'tis a grand impiety. *Then was War in the gates*; that puts an end to all their proſperity.

That's the firſt, it was an *uſual bleſsing*. But,

II. There are ſome congruities, why God thus rewards *Obed-Edom*'s ſervice in lodging the *Ark*, with *temporal bleſsings*. Conceive the reaſon, and congruity of this gracious dealing in theſe four proportions.

1. Here is *proportio præmii cum officio*. This temporal reward was proportionable to the ſervice, that *Obed-Edom* did. It was an D external outward ſervice done to the *Ark*, he entertained, and lodged it, and was at Charges with it; and accordingly God rewards him here with an outward bleſſing.

Even theſe external ſervices, and offices done to God's Church, are accepted, and rewarded. *Hiram* ſhall have Corn and Oyl, for affording materials to the building of the Temple. *Cyrus* ſhall proſper, and be victorious, for reſtoring God's Houſe. Lodge him in thy heart, and Heaven is thy reward. I, but lodge him in thine houſe, and God values that at a temporal rate. *Egypt* fared the better for entertaining the Patriarchs. God ſtored that Countrey; becauſe his Church E was to ſojourn there.

2. Here is *proportio præmii cum ſtatu*. Outward Proſperity was proportionable to the ſtate of that Church; which was trained up under external and temporal Promiſes. Gods dealings with them were moſtwhat viſible and apparent; they lived leſs by Faith, and more by Senſe, and ſo were accordingly dealt withall. Indeed neither were

A were they without ſpiritual, nor we without temporal bleſſings. But yet the Goſpel deals more in ſpiritual Commodities, the Law with temporal. Both Churches ſing *David*'s Songs; *O! how great is thy goodneſs, which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, and which thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee, even before the Sons of men?* Bleſſings laid up, are the bleſſings of the Goſpel: bleſſings laid out before the Sons of men, are the bleſſings of the Law. Under the Law, the immediate Promiſes were *temporal*, *long life*, and *proſperity*: they were Types and pawns of *ſpiritual bleſsings*. Contrary, under the Goſpel our Promiſes are *ſpiritual*; *grace*, and *ſalvation*: and they are
B pledges to us of *temporal bleſsings*. *If thou take the left hand, I will go to the right*, ſaid *Abraham* to *Lot*. The *Jewiſh* Church, ſaith *Ambroſe*, went *ad ſiniſtram*, enjoyed outward bleſſings, the bleſſings of the left hand: the *Chriſtian* Church, with *Abraham*, that goes *ad dextram*; the bleſſings of the right hand is the Chriſtians portion.

3. Here is *proportio præmii cum pœna*. This temporal proſperity on *Obed-Edom*, 'tis proportionable to thoſe Judgments God ſent upon others for prophaning His *Ark*. He had revenged the indignity offered to it by the *Philiſtines* with viſible Plagues: ſo the *Bethſhemites* and *Uzzah*, open and apparent Judgments ſeized upon them,
C for their irreverent Uſage of it. As he ſends temporal Judgments upon the Contemners of it, ſo he rewards the religious Servitours of it with apparent Bleſſings.

It ſhews the Riches of His Mercy, as well as of His Juſtice; that He is as ready to reward, as to puniſh; that He knows as well how to encourage his Servants, as to repay his Enemies.

1. The viſible demonſtration, and interchangeable courſe of theſe two Attributes, doth manifeſt, and ſet forth His Glory completely. *Bonus Deus* and *Juſtus Deus*, were *Marcion*'s two *imaginary Gods*. He thought the God of the *Old Teſtament* was
D all for Juſtice; the God of the *New Teſtament* was the God of Mercy. No, our God is both juſt, and merciful: He knows how to reward his Friends, and to plague his Enemies.
2. It prevents the *ſcandal* and *quarrel*, that Ungodly men would make at his Judgments. They are ready to ſay, *God is an hard Maſter: he can ſpy a fault quickly, and revenge it preſently; but not regard, or reward any duty or ſervice: 'Tis in vain to ſerve Him.*
3. This intercourſe of Mercy and Juſtice, will keep us in the beſt Temper in our Addreſſes to him. It will make us *gaudere*
E *cum tremore*, rejoyce with trembling; which is the beſt joy. Have one eye on His Judgments, profane not his Service, He can plague thee for it: keep another eye on his Mercies, honour his *Ark*, he knows how to bleſs thee.

The interchange and mixture of both theſe, will make us conclude, as St. *Peter* did, "If God ſaved *Noah*, and de-"ſtroyed the World, if he delivered *Lot*, and overthrew

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" *Sodom*, if he deſtroyed *Uzzah*, bleſſed *Obed-Edom*: then ſure- A
" ly the Lord knows how to take *vengeance* on his enemies, and
" withall takes pleaſure in the proſperity of his ſervants.

4. Here is *proportio præmii cum præcepto*. God's viſible proſpering of *Obed-Edom* the *Levite*, for attending the *Ark*, ſuits well with his Law for the *Levites* maintenance; he muſt be partaker, and ſhare with us in our *Temporal proſperity*.

It ſeems, in God's eſteem, 'tis no ſuch Indecency for a *Levite* to proſper, and to enjoy a plentiful portion of Temporal bleſſings. *Bleſs, Lord, his ſubſtance*, was *Moſes* his benediction upon the holy Tribe. And the good Kings followed the ſteps of their Law-giver: *David* B
allotting out their portion; *Hezekiah* commanding, and compelling the People to pay Tythes of all things, and that in abundance, 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 8. and he rejoyced in it; *When the King, and the Princes ſaw the heaps of Tythe, they bleſſed the Lord, and his people Iſrael.*

And hath it not been the ſucceſſive Care of our Gracious Sovereigns thus to preſerve the *Levites* Portion? Queen *Elizabeth*, in Her time, forbidding the alienation of *Church-lands*, or Leaſing them out for any long time, but only to the Crown. That Clauſe was left, as the Door in the Temple, only for the Prince to paſs in at; *Ezek.* xlvi. But, when others got their falſe Keyes to it, Renowned King *James* C
ſhut it up againſt Himſelf too; *Bleſsing and Honour be upon His Memory for it*. And how hath our Gracious Sovereign added to the Care of His Royal Father, directing His expreſs Commands, to bring the letting of the Churches Inheritance within the certain, and moderate compaſs of one and twenty years? Only good *Kings* have delighted in the Churches Proſperity.

And ſo, on the contrary, 'twas the obſervable ſhame of *Ahab*'s ill Reign, that the Prophets of God were mean, and in want, and neceſſity, poor, and in debt; their Children muſt be Bond-men to ſatisfie the Credirors of their deceaſed Fathers, 2 *Kings* iv. 'Twas ſmall D
credit for the *Epheſians*, to hear St. *Paul* proteſt, that *his own hands had ſupplyed his neceſsities*. And is it not the indelible ſtain of many Patrons, and Pariſhes, that the Guides of their Souls ſhould be driven into Secular employments to maintain themſelves; forced to hold ſome Trade in *Commendam* with their Spiritual Functions? *Lapides Sanctuarii in capite omnium platearum*, was *Jeremy*'s Lamentation; that is, ſaith *Gregory*, The Miniſters of the Church are ſcattered and diſperſed into Secular Diſtractions.

No, theſe Fowls of Heaven ſhould be provided for, without their E
ſowing and reaping. Theſe Lillies of Paradiſe ſhould not toil, or labour, and yet grow and flouriſh. As *Auguſtine* alluding to God's curſe upon *Cain*, for killing his brother, *Let the earth be barren unto thee, when thou tilleſt it*; *Quid congruentius*, ſaith he, *quàm ut illum, cujus ſcelere frater occiſus eſt, in terra laborantem, ſterilitas ſequeretur? illis, quorum munere fratres ſalvantur, de craſtino minime cogitantibus, fructuoſa terra ſerviret? Cain*, that killed his Brother, even when he labours,

A labours, is curſed with barrenneſs; the *Levites*, that ſave their brethren, though they labour not, are bleſſed with fruitfulneſs.

That's the ſecond thing obſervable, the *kind* of the Bleſſing, *outward proſperity*.

Thirdly, The third is the *Latitude* and *extent* of this Bleſſing, how far it reached, to *Obed-Edom*'s houſe, and all that pertained to him. God beſtows a diffuſive, comprehenſive bleſſing; like ſome honourable Ghueſt, all the Servants in the houſe taſte of his bounty, fare the better for him. This bleſsing on *Obed-Edom*, like the precious Oyntment upon *Aaron*, 'twas ſhed on his head, and ran down to the loweſt
B skirts of his garment.

So then, here is the portion, and inheritance of God's Servants; their piety to God's *Ark*, and Worſhip, pours a bleſsing upon them, and diffuſes it ſelf to all, that belong to them.

I. His Perſon, that's bleſſed Religion, brings health to the Navel, and marrow to the Bones. God ſhews the Tokens, and Teſtimonies of His favour to them. He hides them in the *Shadow of His hand*. *Kings* and *Prieſts*, Kings the Maintainers, and Prieſts the Servitours of His *Ark*, have a ſpecial Charter of Protection againſt all annoyance; *Touch not mine Annoynted, and do my Prophets no harm.*

C In common Calamities He makes a ſpecial proviſion for them: *Baruch* hath his life given him *for a Prey*. *Jeremy* is exempted from the common Captivity. *When I make up my Jewels*, I will remember them. If an houſe be on fire, men take moſt care for their Plate and Jewels, though other things burn. When God ſends His Judgments upon a Nation, He gives a charge to them, as *David* to *Joab*, uſe my Prophets gently, entreat them well for my ſake. Their *perſons* are bleſſed.

II. His *poſterity* is bleſſed. 'Tis God's uſual courſe to honour His Servants Piety, by bleſſing their Poſterity. And the Scripture obſerves
D it in *Obed-Edom*, 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 8.

(1.) He was bleſſed with a *numerous Progeny*; threeſcore and two of *Obed-Edom*'s Family.

(2.) They were bleſſed with *employment*, all made Officers in the Houſe of God.

(3.) Bleſſed with *enablement* to diſcharge that employment; all able men of ſtrength, *mighty men of valour* for the Service of the Temple. St *Hierom* reports of *Uzzah*, that his Shoulder was ſhrunk up, and withered; he carted the *Ark*, when he ſhould have carried it on his Shoulder: that part was branded for it.

E (4.) They were bleſſed with *Honour*, they were made Rulers, and Commanders through the houſe of their Father: And the reaſon of all is given them; and 'tis this of my Text, *for God bleſſed him*. God's Tabernacle dwelt with him, and now his Poſterity dwells in God's Temple. Thus *David*'s piety was rewarded; *Thou waſt purpoſed to build me an houſe, I will build thee a ſure houſe*, ſaith God, 2 *Sam.* vii. *and bleſs thy ſeed after thee*. The *Shunamite*, ſhe harboured the Prophet,

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phet, entertained, and lodged him, God bleſſes her with Poſterity: *She hath done all this for us, what ſhall we do for her again?* A Son is beſtowed on her. A

On the contrary, *Ahab* perſecutes and havocks God's Prophets, pulls down his *Altars*; his whole Family is ſwept away; ſeventy ſons of *Ahab* cut off, and deſtroyed. *He that deſtroyes the Temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy*; he ſhall pull down the *walls of it in the death of his eldeſt, and deface the gates of it in the death of his youngeſt ſon.* *Zecharie*'s Book of *Curſes* ſhall enter into his Houſe, and conſume the timber, and the pillars of it.

III. His *poſſeſſions* are bleſſed; preſervation, increaſe, a comfortable enjoying them, Religion brings all with it. *Obed-Edom* made his houſe a Sanctuary for God, now God makes it a Sanctuary for him, a place for ſafety. If the King lodges in a private houſe, the Priviledges of the Court belong to it; Robbery, or violence offered there, is an heynous offence; all within the Verge have a Patent of Protection. B

While the people repaired thrice in the year to viſit this *Ark*, and to Worſhip before it, God ſecured their Countrey againſt all their Enemies; he will man, and maintain their *frontier-Towns* againſt any Enemy's inrodes, and invaſions, *Exod.* xxxiv. He makes an hedge about *Obed-Edom* as he did about *Job, about his houſe, and all that he had*; *Thou haſt bleſſed his poſſeſſions, and his ſubſtance is encreaſed.* C

IV. His *actions* and *undertakings* are bleſſed, good ſucceſs attends him. *David*'s prayer for the *Levites* betides him, *We wiſh you good luck, ye, that are of the houſe of the Lord.* That, whereas God blows upon, and blaſts the courſes of prophane men, *Obed-Edom*, and ſuch as he, have a proſperous ſucceſs. He ſees *the travel of his ſoul*, and eats the labours of his hands with comfort; all that he goes about, ſhall proſper with him.

V. His *friends* too, they fare the better for him; a bleſſing on them too. *Obed-Edom* is become a Favourite of Heaven: by lodging the *Ark*, he can ſpeed ſuits for others, obtain bleſſings not for himſelf only, but for others alſo. The *Shunamite* that harboured the Prophet, may obtain any requeſt, either of the King, or the Captain of the Hoſt. *Rahab*, for entertaining of the Spies, ſaves all her Kindred, and acquaintance, her houſe is a Sanctuary to all, that come into it. D

'Tis obſervable that all the *ſix Cities of refuge* appointed in *Iſrael* were all of them Cities belonging to the *Levites*. God honoured the holy Tribe with that high prerogative, made them an hiding-place, and as *the horns of the Altar*, to protect others.

And this enlargement of *bleſſing* upon all that he had, had a threefold ground for it; E

1. 'Tis *redundantia miſericordiæ*; Mercy, 'tis ſtill over-flowing and redundant. *'Tis a ſmall thing*, ſaith *David* to God, *that thou haſt brought me hitherto; thou haſt promiſed good to thy ſervants houſe for a great while to come.* Is this the manner of man, *O God*, thus to requite ſmall ſervices with ſuch large rewards? But 'tis the way of his Mercy;

it

A it keeps not within his own Channel, but over-flows the Bank; *Good meaſure preſſed down, ſhaken together, and running over*, exceeding abundantly; *Ultra merita*, nay *ſupra vota*, ſaith *Bernard*, above all we can ask or think.

2. 'Tis *prærogativa officii*. This kinde of ſervice in advancing God's Worſhip, honouring of his *Ark*, hath this kinde of *bleſſing* uſually vouchſafed it, it brings a bleſſing upon a man, and upon his Poſterity. That Commandement, that provides for God's *Ark*, and Worſhip, and the maintaining of it, aſſures this favour in the largeſt terms, it promiſes mercy to *a thouſand generations* of them that obey it.

B As, on the contrary, the ſin of *Sacrilege*, involves a man, and all that is his, in the curſe that follows it. *Achan* periſhed not alone in his Sacrilege, his whole Family ſmarted, and was rooted out. This ſin is as Leproſie in the walls, eats out the ſtone and timber, rots the foundation; like *Gehazie*'s ſpot, 'tis an original Curſe to all his poſterity.

David vowed his ſervice *to build God a Temple*: what was the ſpecial mercy God aſſured to him for it? *Of the fruit of thy body will I ſet upon thy Throne*. He ſwears to God, he would build him an Houſe; God ſwears to him, *Thy Children ſhall ſit upon thy Throne for ever*.

The thankfulneſs of this day, and your own Meditations, can point
C out the parallel; *and the ſure mercies of* David *be His portion for it*.

3. Here is *congruitas retributionis*. *Obed-Edom*, and all that he had, was *bleſſed*; he, and all that he had were ſerviceable to the *Ark*. And ſo all that he had ſhares in the *bleſſing*. The beſt way to ſecure all we have, is to ſanctifie all we have, by this holy employment. *Honour God with all thine encreaſe*: and then all thine encreaſe ſhall be enriched with a bleſſing. The *Jewiſh* Doctors have a ſaying (I wiſh *Chriſtians* would believe it) that *Decimæ* are *ſepes divitiarum*; a juſt payment of Tythes is as an Hedge, or Fence about all our Poſſeſſions: God's *ſtore-houſe* is our beſt *aſſuring-houſe*; pay thy dues to that, that the reſt
D may proſper with thee. *Noah* offered up to God of every kind, when he could have it; that every kind might receive a bleſſing from him. The leaſt fraudulent detaining of God's right, and portion, makes all that thou haſt liable to His Juſtice; as he that purchaſes but one foot of *Ward-land*, makes all his Eſtate liable to the King. I paſs,

Fourthly, to the fourth particular; the *reaſon* and motive that God had reſpect to, that which procured, and brought down this *bleſſing*; it was *becauſe of the Ark of God*. And the ſtrength of this reaſon will appear in a double reference.

I. Reſpectively to the *Ark* it ſelf, that was entertained.

E II. Reſpectively to *Obed-Edom*, that did entertain it.

I. Look upon this *bleſſing* in reference to the *Ark*; that ſacred Utenſil brought a *bleſſing* with it. And then the ſeveral conſiderations of it will ſhew the ſeveral reſpects, and reaſons of this *bleſſing*. I will touch them briefly.

1. The *Ark* brings a *bleſſing* to *Obed-Edom*'s houſe; it was *ſignum præſentiæ divinæ*; the *Ark* was a viſible token, and ſign of God's more imme-

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immediate, and gracious presence. The *Ark*, it was God's resting place; *He dwelt between the Cherubims*, Psal. lxxx. 'Twas *the dwelling-place of His Name*. Psal. lxxiv. 7. Where the *Ark* was, there God pitch'd his Tent; *Here will I dwell, for I have a delight in it.*

Now *his gracious presence* always brings a *blessing with it*. As light is, where the Sun is; so where God's presence is, *blessings* always attend him. If *Solomon*'s servants were happy, that stood in his presence, how happy are they that wait in God's Courts! *David* highly prizes this favour; being in exile, removed from this *Ark*, how doth he long for it! *O! when shall I appear before the presence of God!* Psal. lxv. 4. *Blessed is the man, whom thou chooseſt, and causeſt to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; he shall be satisfied with the goodness of thine house, even of thine holy Temple.* When God dwells amongst us, when he continues with us, we may hope for a *blessing*.

2. The *Ark* brings a blessing with it; it was *signaculum fœderis*, the visible token and pledge of his Covenant. 'Tis called *Arca fœderis*, the *Ark of God's Covenant*. The *Ark* then brings a *blessing* with it; because it represents, and seals *God's Covenant* with his people. And that's the Tenure and Charter of all our *blessings*. While the *Covenant* continues with us, we are *a People near unto him* God's Tabernacle is with men, and he will be their *God*, and they shall be *his people*.

When he places his *Ark* amongst us, there passes a mutual *vouchè* betwixt God and us, *Deut.* 26.18. *He avouches us to be his people, and we avouch him to be our God.* And this Covenant is the Conveyance of all mercies, and favours, 'tis the pledg of his Promises. *Evangelium*, 'tis *cautio promissionis*, saith St. *Ambrose*, 'tis a pledge, and caution to make good his Promises. We may plead this Covenant in any need, or exigent; *Tanquam ex syngrapha fides impetrat*, saith St. *Ambrose*. Faith presses God's Covenant; *Look upon the Covenant*, saith *David*. As *Augustine* of his Mother, *Ingessit tibi tuam syngraphan*: she urged God with his own hand-writing, pleaded his Covenant. Keep close to this *Ark* of the *Covenant*, 'tis our *Palladium*, the pledge of our prosperity, and assurance of all our prosperity.

3. The *Ark* brings a *blessing* with it; 'twas *instrumentum cultûs*, the choice and chief Instrument, and Appurtenance of God's Worship. They directed all their Worship that way; *Give ear, O thou, that dwellest between the Cherubims.* So then the *Ark* brings a blessing with it, because with that was celebrated the Worship of God. *Piety* and *devotion* in the Worship of God, 'tis the greatest breeder, and procurer of *blessing*. Here is a chief reason, why *Obed Edom* prospered; his House was a constant Oratory, and Temple to God. God honours such daily servitours, and sets much by them, that put him not off with some *set-days* service; like *Church-retainers*: but those, that, like *menial servants*, behold him *daily*. *Certis diebus legere, & orare, & non omnibus, fastidientis est, & non diligentis*: saith the Father. They, whose Houses, Chappels, Studies, can testifie their daily Devotion, may with *Obed-Edom* look for a Blessing.

4. The

A 4. The *Ark* brings a *Bleſsing* with it: twas *Typus Chriſti*, a ſacred Myſtery, repreſenting Chriſt to them. He, indeed, is the true *Ark* of the Covenant, *Arca Teſtamenti*: He the *Propitiatory*, and only true *Mercy-ſeat*; upon Him the *Cherubims* look, on Him they attend. Then the *Ark* came out of the *Philiſtines* Countrey, when by his Reſurrection (which now we celebrate) He mightily bore down the *Gates of death*. Indeed Chriſt is both *Ark* and *Altar*; *Temple* and *Sacrifice*; Morning and Evening Sacrifice are accompliſhed in him. His Paſſion began at the third hour, the time of the Morning Sacrifice, ended at the Ninth hour, the time of the Evening Sacrifice. *Arca noſtra* Chriſtus *in cœlo eſt*, ſaith *Irenæus*. He is the golden Altar
B of all our Services. And Chriſt, we know, He is the Author, and Donor, the Mediator, and Meritor of all Mercies, and Bleſſings; *He bleſſes us with all kinde of bleſsings in* Chriſt.

5. The *Ark* brings a Bleſſing with it: 'twas *Oraculum benedictionis*. From before the *Ark* God delivered, and pronounced His Bleſsings; from thence they looked to receive a bleſsing. *Hear, O thou Shepheard of* Iſrael, *thou that dwelleſt between the Cherubims, ſhine forth*, Pſal. lxxx. 1. God makes His *Ark* and Tabernacle, the Staple, and Store-houſe of all his bleſsings, *Exod.* 20. 24. *In all places*,
C *where I record my Name, I will come to thee, and bleſs thee.*

Hence we ſee, that in Scripture, that God's Bleſſings are not given from Heaven immediately; but from His *Ark* and Sanctuary, and place of His Worſhip. *Pſal.* cxxxiv. 3. *The Lord, that made Heaven, and Earth, bleſs thee out of Sion.* Pſal. cxxxiii. 3. *The Lord hath commanded His bleſsing, and life, for evermore.* The Ocean of bleſſings indeed is in Heaven, but the Spring, and Well-head, whence we muſt draw them, that's His *Ark* in *Sion*. *Noli quærere benedictiones, quæ non ſunt ex Sione*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. The Churches Bleſſing, the Bleſſing of *Aaron*: 'tis *Scitula Gratiæ*. Even *Balaak* confeſſed,
D that the bleſſing of the Prophet had great force and vertue in it.

The Heathen, when they prayed in good earneſt, *Non ad Capitolium, ſed ad Cœlum, reſpiciunt*, ſaith *Tertullian*. And 'tis the natural Proſpect of Faith and Prayer. And yet God's People were to look, *Non ad cœlum tantùm, ſed ad Sanctuarium*, towards the Temple, as the ſeat of His Oracle, and the fountain of Bleſſing.

That's the firſt Reference to the *Ark* it ſelf.

II. The *Ark* brings a Bleſſing on *Obed-Edom* in another reference, reſpectively to him, and his entertainment of it; which commended him, and his ſervice to Gods acceptation, and brought a
E bleſſing upon him.

1. He entertained, and uſed this ſacred Sojourner, *Summâ reverentiâ*, with all due reverence, and veneration. The *Philiſtines*, they were plagued *ob prophanam inſultationem*, they inſulted and triumphed over it. The *Bethſhemites*, they were ſlain *ob irreverentem exultationem*; they received it joyfully, but they were too bold with it. *Uzzah* ſtruck dead *ob neglectum, & temeritatem*; he failed in his

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attendance of it. But *Obed-Edom* received it reverently, and receives a *bleſsing* for it. *Sancta Sanctè.* He knew the manner of the *God of Iſrael*, and the reverence that is due to Him. This is the Leſſon *Moſes* read to *Aaron*, upon the death of his two Sons *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *The Lord will be ſanctified in all that come near Him.* 'Tis not every welcoming God's *Ark*, or Religion, that will finde acceptance; we may be too bold, homely and familiar with it. *Let's have Grace*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Hebr. xii. 28, 29. *whereby we may ſerve God acceptably*; how is that, *with reverence and godly fear*; why ſo? *For our God is a conſuming fire.* He received it reverently. A

2. He entertained it *ſumma promptitudine*; he received the *Ark* then when others were ſhie of it, loth to come near it, or to have to do with it. *David* refuſed to bring it to his Houſe, *Verſ.* 9. The *Bethſhemites* ſent it away to *Kirjath-jearim*, glad to be rid of it; and ſo *Obed-Edom*, like *Zacheus*, he comes forth readily, and receives it joyfully. B

I, this is thank-worthy with God, to own His *Ark* then, when others neglect it, and keep aloof from it. It may breed trouble to us, to have it too near us. Indeed, 'tis the *Levites* Portion, and we of that Tribe ſhall do well to reckon of it. We muſt ſtick to the *Ark of God*, and bear it upon our ſhoulders, and lodge it in our houſes; when all others forſake it. *If I periſh, I periſh*: the *Ark* muſt not be forſaken. As the *Roman* Souldiers ſware to their General, *Pugnabo pro Sacris, & ſolus, & cum aliis.* It becomes *Elijah* to be zealous for his God, though left alone, and none to take part with him. C

Bleſſed be God, we live under a King, under whom it is not a Shame, but an Honour, to bear the *Ark*. The *Levites* may well bear it; when the King dances before it, and glories in the preſence of it.

But yet, had we an *Ahab*, as we have a *David*, the *Levites* muſt not give over the *Ark*. We muſt learn to be *partakers of the afflictions of the Goſpel*, as St. *Paul* inſtructs *Timothy*. And God had forewarned *Paul* of it, *I have ſhewed him what things he muſt ſuffer for my Name.* It was a Clauſe in his Ordination at his firſt Apoſtleſhip. *Ye are they that have continued with me in my Temptation*, ſaith Chriſt to his Apoſtles. *Nudum Chriſtum nudus ſequar*; ſhould be the *Levites* reſolution; and it brings a Bleſſing with it. D

3. He entertained it *Roboratâ fide*. 'Twas a ſtrong Temptation, to ſee ſo many Miſchiefs before him, thouſands deſtroyed, and ſtruck dead by it, and ſo it was a ſtrong Faith in him, that could overcome thoſe Fears, and Temptations, and hope to ſpeed well with it.

That Faith honours God much, and is highly prized by Him, that can over-look, and over-leap dangers and difficulties in doing Him ſervice, put its life in his hand, and ſtick to God then, when perils beſet him. *Obed-Edom* believed that God was intreatable, and that *as with the froward He had ſhewed himſelf froward*, ſo *with the upright He would ſhew himſelf mercifull.* 'Twas great Piety in the third Captain of Fifty, when two Captains with their Fifties were ſlain before him, *ſubmiſſively* to ſue to the Prophet *Elijah*, *O let my life be precious in thine eyes*; and he ſped accordingly.' E

I have

A I have done with the *first* part of my Text, the *Bleſſed ſucceſs* that befell *Obed-Edom* for receiving the *Ark*. Now follows the

Second, The *Notice* and *Obſervation* that was made of this Succeſs; *And it was told King* David.

And here is a double Notice;

Firſt, The Notice they *take* of it.

Secondly, The Notice they *give* of it.

Firſt, They *take Notice* of it: Mens Eyes are open upon *Obed-Edom*, and his Houſe, now the *Ark* is with him: The *Ark*, and the *Prieſthood*, and the ſucceſs of both; Religion, and the Welfare of it, is made a B matter of *Obſervation*. They will have Eyes upon them.

I. A *gazing* Eye; a ſort of men, that look upon Religion, and the attendants of it, as a Novelty, or ſome ſtrange thing. *Behold here am I*, ſaith the Prophet; *and thoſe that thou haſt given me, are for Signs and Wonders*. As *Herod* beheld Chriſt, ſee what he could do; look on him a little, and then ſlight, and ſcorn him, and ſet him at naught.

II. A *malignant* Eye: *Obed-Edom* muſt look for ſuch Eyes upon him, that repine at his welfare. *Theſe* Levites *grow too rich; a great deal leſs is too much for them. Shepherds* are an *abomination* to the *Egyptians*; and ſo are *God*'s *Miniſters* to *prophane worldlings*. Thus *Doeg*'s Eye C was on the Prieſts, to eſpy any Miſcarriage, and inform againſt them.

III. But this was an Eye of *judicious*, and *religious Obſervation*. *Mark the Upright, and behold the Juſt*. That was the Eye, that now beheld *Obed-Edom*. They obſerve his condition judiciouſly, and judg of it ſoberly, impute his proſperity to God, as the proper Cauſe, and to the *Ark of God*, as to the proper Motive, and Reaſon of it.

What moved them to that?

Three things eſpecially;

1. Their *Piety*.
2. Their *Charity*.

D 3. The *Evidence* of the thing it ſelf.

1. Their *Piety*; they ſpeak, like *David*'s ſervants, and ſubjects; they attribute this Proſperity to the Bleſſing of God. They talk not of it, as the *Philiſtins* did of the Judgment that befell them for the *Ark* of God; *May be, it is but a chance that hath happened to us*. 1 Sam. vi. Good-luck hath befallen *Obed-Edom*: and make no more of it. No; true Piety knows theſe Bleſſings are not *miſsilia fortunæ*, the Doles of blinde *Fortune*; but the gracious Diſpenſations of *Divine Providence*. *Riches and Honour are in the hand of Wiſdom*, Prov. iii. that reaches them out knowingly and adviſedly; not at the foot of E Fortune, to be ſpurned into the World at all adventures. *Obed-Edom* they knew was God's Houſhold-ſervant, and ſo was at his Maſters finding; ſhifts not for himſelf. *It was God that gave him ſtrength to be rich*, and ſtored him with *plenty*.

2. Their *Charity* moves them to this obſervation of *Obed-Edom*'s Proſperity: they gladly take notice of his good ſervice to the *Ark*, and impute his welfare to that motive.

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Neither *David*, nor his followers, make the like conſtruction of *Uzzah*'s Calamity, (The Scripture indeed expreſſes it) but none of them ſay, *This Judgment befell him for his prophanation.* Charity may ſafely make conſtructions, and applications of *Bleſſings* and *Mercies*, and it delights to do it; but interpretations of *Judgments* are not ſo warrantable. In ſuch Caſes, *Ille debet judicare, qui non poteſt errare.* Is God's hand upon the Land in any Viſitation? Let every man bewail his own Sins; *The Plague of his own heart*, and mourn for the Sins of the Land too. But he, that will ſay, *Certainly theſe are the Sinners, whom God aims at*, let him call for the *Ephod*, conſult with God, as *David* did about the years of Famine. If an *Oracle* ſpeaks to him, he may cenſure warrantably. A B

In pronouncing of *Bleſſings* we may be more particular and perſonal, than in denouncing of *Curſes* and *Judgments* on others. The very Language of Scripture leads us to this. The *bleſſings* from Mount *Gerazim* were to be ſpoken more fully, and with application; *Thus they ſhall bleſs the people*: but the *Curſes* from Mount *Ebal* were not ſo home, but in a more ſuſpenſive way; not thus, *Curſe the people*; but thus, *They ſhall Curſe.* The *Jews* obſerve, that *Gerazim* ſtood South-ward, *ad dextram mundi*; *Ebal* North-ward, *ad ſiniſtram mundi*; the motion of the right-hand is more quick and active. And the Curſing Tribes on *Ebal* were the Sons of the Hand-maids; the Tribes on *Gerazim* were the Sons of the Free-woman. Right-bred Chriſtians deſire to *bleſs* rather. St. *Paul* ſends *bleſſings*, and Salutations perſonally; but his *Curſe* is in general, and conditional only; *If any man love not the Lord* Jeſus Chriſt, *let him be* Anathema. That Thunder-bolt hovers aloft in the Skie, ſeizes on no ſubject. That's a ſecond, the manifeſtation of their *Charity*. C

3. A third ground of their Obſervation is, the *Evidence* of the *things*. There was a double hint in it.

(1.) The *bleſſing* was *extraordinary*; they could not but obſerve it. Thus God graces his ſervants with remarkable Teſtimonies of his favour, that even Strangers and Enemies muſt ſee, and confeſs it. *We ſee certainly* (ſaith *Abimelech* to *Iſaac*) *that the Lord is with thee. I have learned by experience* (ſaith *Laban* to *Jacob*) *that God's bleſſing goes with thee.* All men ſhall ſay, *This hath God done.* D

(2.) The *time*, and *ſeaſon*, was obſervable. His Proſperity began with his Piety; the *Bleſſing* entered into his Houſe, when the *Ark* entered. Thus *Haggai* (chap. ii.) dates the Proſperity of his people from the very Moneth and Day when their Piety began. *From the four and twentieth day of the ninth moneth, from the day that the foundation of the Temple was layd, from this day will I bleſs you.* E

And may not we thus Calculate, and caſt the time of *our* Proſperity? From the day that God's *Ark* was ſettled amongſt us, what Tokens of good hath God ſhewed upon us? that our

Enemies

A Enemies have ſeen it, and been aſhamed, and confeſſed, that *God was amongſt us.* In the continued ſucceſſion of three gracious Princes, the great Protectors of his *Ark*, and Worſhip, what *extraordinary bleſſings* have betided our Nation? What Treaſons diſcovered, and diſappointed? What Enemies repreſſed, and driven back again? What Peace in our Borders? What Plenty in our Palaces? even to the admiration and envy of neighbouring Nations.

I paſs to the

Second notice, the *notice* they give of it. *It was told King David.*

B And their purpoſe and intendment in acquainting the King with it, will briefly appear in theſe ſix particular Expreſſions.

1. *They tell King David* of it. *Spectat ad pietatem Regis.* It ſhews us what Tidings were acceptable to the King. They knew it would be welcom News to hear *Obed-Edom*, and ſuch as he, proſper. 'Tis ſad News he ſent by *Cuſhi* the *Black-Moore*; but every man ſprings forward to bring welcom Tidings.

Here is the pattern of a Religious Prince. And, bleſſed be God, we ſee it exemplified. *Holy King*, and *happy Prieſthood*, whoſe welfare and proſperity the King delights in; that counts it the joy of his

C heart, and the honour of his Kingdom, to hear the Servants of his God proſper under his Government.

2. *They tell King David* of it. *Spectat ad ſcandalum Regis. Uzzah*'s death had ſcandalized King *David*, made him ſhie, and afraid of the *Ark of God.* By theſe good Tidings they deſire to put credit, and honour upon Religion, to remove this ſcandal from the *Ark of God*, and to procure favour to it. 'Tis an argument of Piety to put an honourable report upon Religion, to ſpeak well of the wayes of God. 'Tis *opus Angeli removere ſcandala de regno Dei*, as St. *Bernard* truly: Eſpecially not to caſt jealouſies into Princes Thoughts; as if *piety*

D and *loyalty* were things inconſiſtent; as if the *Ark of God* were ſome *Trojan* Horſe, or ſome Engine of War, as once about *Jericho.*

How ready are prophane men, like the *ten Spies*, to raiſe an ill report of this *Land of Promiſe*, and to diſcourage the people? *The land conſumes the Inhabitants*, the *Ark* miſchiefs all, that came near it; Religion undoes men. But the ſpirit of *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, ſpeaks in theſe men, they endeavour to encourage King *David*; *O, 'tis a good Land, the* Ark *brings a bleſſing with it, they all proſper that love it.*

3. *They tell King David* of it. *Spectat ad poteſtatem Regis.* They knew the care of the *Ark*, and *Religion* belonged to the King. The

E Cauſe of Religion, and of them that attend it, the Government, and Inſpection of them appertain to the King, as part of his Sovereignty.

Princes are not only *Fathers* of the Common-wealth; but *Governours* of the Church too. *Tibi commiſi Sacerdotes meos.* His Authority extends to the ordering of the Clergy, and the Affairs of Religion. *Serviunt Reges* Chriſto, *Leges ferendo pro* Chriſto. To eſtabliſh Religion as a Law; 'tis the King's Prerogative. *Quid, mente ſobrius,*

Regi-

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Regibus dicat, Non ad vos pertinet curare, à quo curetur, aut oppugnetur Eccleſia; quis velit eſſe ſive religioſus, ſive ſacrilegus? ſaith Saint *Auguſtine.* A

The *Buſineſs* of Religion belongs to their Cognizance. Settling the *Ark* in *Jeruſalem* muſt begin from the King. Hence we ſee all Alterations in the Church are aſcribed to the Prince. In the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, the *Prieſthood* and *People* were ſubſervient to it; but the Authority of the *Prince* was the *firſt mover* in it.

Romam, *aut* Alexandriam, *non Fabros, aut Architectos, ſed Reges, quorum voluntate, conſilio, imperio fabricatæ ſunt, condidiſſe dicimus*; ſaith Saint *Auguſtine. We ſay, not Maſons, and Carpenters, but Kings and Princes, are Builders of Cities*; and ſo the Eſtabliſhing of Churches, 'tis an act of Soveraignty, and Supreme Authority, though others labour in it. In this Caſe, the skill and ability of Clergy and People, are all to be employed by this Architectonical and Supreme Power. Kings do that, which Subjects do upon their appointment. As *Benhadad* writes to *Ahab* the King, *I have ſent* Naaman *unto thee, that thou mayeſt cure him of his Leproſie.* How could he cure him? The Leproſie was not the King's-Evil, that *Ahab* could heal it. True, but *Eliſha* the Prophet was the King's Subject, and what the Prophet could do, the King might command, and ſo he may do it. *Without thy word, no man ſhall lift up hand or foot in thy Kingdom*; 'tis the Royal Charter. B C

4. *They tell King David* of *Obed-Edom*'s proſperity. *Spectat ad Votum Regis*: *David* had undertaken, and vowed the reducing of the *Ark*, and Fear had made him give over that Work, ſlack the performance of what he had promiſed. He was *reus voti*, his Vows were ſtill upon him. See, how ſweetly and loyally they reminde him of his Duty, woo and win him to the Diſcharge of his Vow by this inſinuation.

Kings muſt be ſought unto with ſubmiſſive Entreaties, not encountered with bold and audacious Expoſtulations; not upbraided with their Oaths and Promiſes: much leſs threatned, and menaced, if they will not perform them. As the *Secular Prieſts* did threaten King *James*, if he would not give way to their Superſtition, who knows what the forcible Weapon of *Neceſsity* may drive them to? Or, as *Bellarmine* wrote to Him, *Si Rex* Angliæ *vitæ ſuæ conſulere cupiat, ſinat* Catholicos *frui Religione ſuâ*; or elſe he ſhall hear of them. *O, non eſt Religionis, cogere Religionem*; ſaith *Tertullian.* Religion makes no forcible entry; eſpecially, not in Kings and Princes; breaks not in with *threatnings* upon them. Nay, *irreverent reproofs* are violations of Majeſty. *'Tis as the ſin of* Uzzah (ſaith St. *Hierom*) *that would ſtay up the* Ark *by an irreverent touch of it.* D E

Nathan ſhews us the way, how to call Kings to repentance. He catched King *David*'s Conſcience with a Parable; hides the Inſtrument, that muſt lance the Sore. *Abſcondit ferrum*, ſaith *Chryſoſtom, nè abhorreret Medicinam; non ſub veſtimento, ſed ſub velamine narrationis*: Or, as *Gregory* expreſſeth it, *Ferrum, mollibus obvolutum, in locum purilentum ſciùs adegit.*

5. They

A 5. *They tell King David* of *Obed-Edom*'s prosperity by the *Ark* of God. *Spectat ad utilitatem Regis*; 'tis a faithfull suggestion for the King's good, and prosperity. If there be a *blessing* to be had, 'tis reason the King should be sharer in it. The four Lepers of *Samaria* may teach us this Duty; when they discovered the rich Spoils of the *Syrians*, they presently resolve to give the King notice of it; *Come, let's go tell the King's Houshold of it*, 2 King. vii. 9. Every man counts himself happy, that can be serviceable to his Soveraigns Welfare.

Here is a Project for King *David*'s prosperity: let him pitch a Tabernacle for the *Ark* in *Sion*, establish, and countenance, and advance Re-
B ligion, it will store him with *blessings*. 'Tis pity, *Obed-Edom* should engross this Blessing. The *Ark* in his house is like a Mine of Gold in a private man's Ground, belongs to the Crown. Here is Treasure-trove in *Obed-Edom*'s house; the King lays claim to it.

6. They acquaint the King with *Obed-Edom*'s Success. *Spectat ad felicitatem regni*. They desire this Blessing by the King, it may be improved for the *publique good*, that all may be sharers in it. They think it not sufficient to commend *Obed-Edom* for his piety, or applaud his prosperity; but that all the Kingdom should imitate and equal him. They do not desire to cloyster up *Religion* in *Obed-Edom*'s house only.

C With some, indeed, Piety is never in esteem; but when 'tis a Rarity: like Fashions, when they grow common, they are layd aside presently. There is too much Religion; *Eldad* and *Medad*, and the Common-people should mind other matters, leave Religion to *Obed-Edom*, and a few *Levites*. *Tully* reproves the fondness of such men; *Iniqui sunt, qui in re eò meliore, quò major est, mediocritatem desiderant*. Piety is never so glorious, as when 'tis spreading and universal. And St. *Augustine* upbraids it in the *Romans*, that admired *Regulus*, but took no care to have others prove like to him: *Quid facies iis hominibus, qui gloriantur se habere talem civem, qualem totam nolunt*
D *habere civitatem?*

Religion in a *Levite* doth well; but it concerns not the People. *Object.*
Let Church-men mind the things of the Church.

No. These men wish, that *all the Lord's people* should improve, *Respons.*
and prosper in their piety.

And they take the right course for it. If the King honour, and advance Religion; all others will embrace it. Naturally, a Loyal People delight in the Piety of their Prince, and Sovereign. When *David* kept a Fast, all the People took notice of it, and it pleased them, as *whatsoever the King did, pleased all the people*, 2 Sam. iii. 36. And
E they are prone to imitate it. Kings to private Men, are as Stamps to Coyns, as Seals and Prints to Paper: Piety in them begets the like in Millions that belong unto them; they will presently receive Impression from him.

Religion from a King waters his Kingdom with Blessings, like a shower of Rain: from private men, 'tis like the watering of a Garden, or some Spot of ground. If the Spring be high; you may con-

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conveigh the Water to all places about it, far and near, in abundance. A

'Tis the happineſs of this Day we now Celebrate; and we thankfully acknowledge it. We may take up *David*'s Exultation in the ſixty eighth Pſalm, the Pſalm penned of purpoſe, when the *Ark* was removed, and placed in *Jeruſalem*: *We may bleſs God now, in the* Congregations, *è fonte Iſraëlis*, from the Example of our King, the Fountain of *Iſrael*. God's Houſe, and the King's Houſe are *conterminous*, built upon the ſame *Hill of Sion*. Our eyes ſee it, and give witneſs to it, and our hearts rejoyce in it.

Nay, the *Ark* of God this day had a new eſtabliſhment. Indeed, it was not ſo much as *ſhaken* by the death of King *James*; but continued ſteady without the leaſt commotion. *Moſes* went up the Hill, and *Joſhua* came down to us; and no fears and perplexities came betwixt, or cry in our Streets, only the Mournings of Love and Loyalty. *The Lord our God was ſtill with us, and the joyfull ſhout of a King was amongſt us*: and the preſence of God's *Ark* was again aſſured us. B

This day, our King, like that Religious Emperour, ſet His Crown on the Bible. The *initiation* of His Reign, 'twas the *continuation* of Religion, the *coronation* of the Goſpel. C

And long may we celebrate this His joyfull Feſtival in our generations. *The* LORD *keep Him from the day of trouble, the Name of the mighty God* Jacob *preſerve Him, ſend Him help from His Sanctuary, and ſtrengthen Him out of* Sion; *let the* Ark *of thy preſence be always precious unto Him, and let the preſence of that* Ark *evermore proſper Him. Save Him, Lord, and hear us, O King of Heaven, when we ſhall call upon thee. And that for* Jeſus Chriſt *His ſake*; *To whom with thee*, &c.

ON

ON King CHARLES the First's INAUGURATION.

The Second Sermon.

HAGGAI ii. 23.

In that Day, ſaith the LORD *of Hoſts, will I take thee, O* Zerubbabel *my Servant, the Son of* Shealtiel, *ſaith the* LORD, *and will make thee as a Signet: for I have choſen thee, ſaith the* LORD *of Hoſts.*

THIS Propheſie of *Haggai*, for the Date and Seaſon of it, was directed to the *Jews*, ſoon after their Return out of Captivity. And it contains a Mixture and Compoſition of Expoſtulations and Promiſes. The chief Expoſtulation is for the People's *backwardneſs* in *building* the *Temple*. Upon their Return home, they all fell to *good Husbandry*, ſet up their own Houſes, plowed, and ſowed their Lands, thought it not yet time to undertake ſo *coſtly a Work*, as *building the Temple*.

And, truly, Fleſh and Blood would have thought this Delay excuſable, if not reaſonable: Firſt, to get things about them, ere they ſet upon works of publique Magnificence. But, ſee, God accompts it matter of juſt exception; He looks to be firſt ſerved, that His Glory and Worſhip have the precedency. *Provide firſt for me*, ſaith *Elijah, and then for thy ſelf, and thy childe afterwards*, 1 Kings xvii. 13. As ſoon as *Noah* came out of the *Ark*, his firſt care was to build an *Altar*: An *Ark* for Deliverance, and an *Altar* for Thankfulneſs, are the two firſt Structures that the Scripture tells us of. And 'tis obſervable, God *commanded* him to build an *Ark*; but his own Thankfulneſs

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fulneſs moves him to build an *Altar*: and he doth it preſently, pleads not neceſſity of *preſerving of ſtore*, ſtays not till the Creatures were more multiplied; but takes of every clean Creature, that came out the *Ark*, and offers them to God. A

Some count it a Check given to *Jacob* for his backwardneſs, that God calls for his Vow (*Gen.* xxxv. 1.) *Go up to* Beth-el, *and there build an Altar.* God is fain to diſpatch two Prophets to the *Jews*; firſt *Haggai*, he reproves them for not building the Temple: When that was built, the Prieſts portion was detained, the Churches Patrimony muſt ſerve for other uſes; then he ſends *Malachy* to reprove that Sacriledge, and Robbery of God. B

To bring on this Work more chearfully, He ſweetens this Expoſtulation with many gracious Promiſes.

Firſt, He promiſes the ſettlement, and advancement of *Religion* amongſt them, the reſtoring and beautifying of his publick Worſhip; *I will fill this Houſe with glory, ſaith the* LORD *of Hoſts*, Verſe 7. He will pitch his Tabernacle amongſt them; He will beautifie his Sanctuary, and make the place of his Feet glorious. What Favour more precious, then for God to ſay to us, *Here I will dwell, for I have a delight in it?* Then, having ſettled Religion,

Secondly, He will make a Fence about it, to ſecure, and preſerve it. C That's his ſecond Promiſe, a promiſe of Peace; *In this place will I give peace, ſaith the* LORD *of Hoſts*, Verſe 9. Peace, 'tis *antemurale Religionis*, it preſerves Religion. War, and Contention, doth deface and ruin it. *Then had the Churches reſt, and were edified*, Acts ix. 31. To have *Jeruſalem* built in troubleſom times, was but a ſad prediction, *Dan.* ix. 25. The work went but ſlowly forward, when they built with one hand, and held a Weapon in the other; *Nehem.* iv. 17. Blows do not build up, but beat down the Church. When the Temple was ſet up, *there was no noyſe of Hammers heard*; but, when 'twas pulled down, *they brake down the carved work thereof with axes, and* D *hammers*; Pſal. lxxiv. 6. His ſecond promiſe then, 'tis moſt proper, and ſeaſonable, of Peace, and Security.

Thirdly, Having given them Peace, he will furniſh them with Plenty; that's a third Promiſe. *Their Vines, and their Corn, and their Olives*; He will bleſs them in all, *Verſe* 19. *Peace* and *Poverty*, they breed but cold comfort; but the conjunction of theſe two, to make *peace in our borders*, and withall, to *fill us with the floure of Wheat*, Pſal. cxliii. theſe two are the great Ingredients to make up a compleat Proſperity.

A Nation, thus bleſſed of God with Piety, Peace, Plenty, may ſing *Eſay*'s Song of his Vine-yard. Here is, E

I. *Turris Religionis*; His Temple, and Sanctuary ſet up amongſt them.

II. *Maceria pacis*; The wall, and fence of peace and ſafety.

III. *Torcular abundantiæ*; The over-flowing of the Wine-preſs in plenty, and abundance.

Here is, *συναγωγὴ beneficiorum*; one Mercy encircled and compact within

A within another, ἀγαθῶν ἀγαθίσις, bunches and clusters of Blessings. Here are not single Favours; but the meetings and kissings, and embracings of Mercies, *Psal.* lxxxv. 10.

Now, were we our own choosers and carvers, we would all say, *Enough, Lord, enough, thou hast richly provided for us*; never proceed to *Esau*'s cravings, *Hast thou not one blessing more for us?* But God sees there is one thing wanting to make up a full fruition of all these: and that's the blessing of Magistracy, and Government. There must be not only Religion; but a *Defensor Religionis*: not only Peace; but a *Custos pacis*: not only a Plenty; but a *Curator annonæ*:

B without which, neither Religion, Peace, nor Plenty will long continue, and prove lasting to us: and that's,

Fourthly, The fourth Promise, which my Text seals up to them, the Establishment of their Government, the setting, and settling over them the Supreme Magistrate. *Zerubbabel* shall be magnified, and honoured; and his Authority advanced amongst them. This Mercy, 'tis like the last work of the Creation. After God had framed the World, and stored it with his blessings, He brings in *Zerubbabel*, like *Adam*, to govern the World, to dress and keep this Garden of God. Thus *David*, surveying that great Workmanship of God's, *Psal.* civ. brings in Man,

C as the Accomplishment of all; and then breaks out into Praise, and Admiration, *Vers.* 24. *O LORD, how manifold are thy Works! in Wisdom hast thou made them all: The whole World is full of thy riches.* Piety, and Peace, and Plenty, and all these protected by Sovereign Authority; *Happy are the people that be in such a case!* Psal. cxliv. 15.

The Text then, it acquaints us with God's gracious intendment to magnifie *Zerubbabel*, and to put honour upon him. And we may consider it in a threefold notion:

First, As a *Prophecy*.
Secondly, As a *Promise*.

D *Thirdly*, As a *Reward*, assured to *Zerubbabel*.

First, 'Tis a Prophecy directed to *Zerubbabel*, acquainting him with the future events in the World, and what shall betide him, and his People under him. 'Tis the Priviledge of his Church, and chosen Ones; they have those *arcana Imperii* made known unto them. The successions, and events of Ages, and Generations; the raising, and ruins of States, and Dominions: He discloses them to his Prophets, and his choice servants. His purpose to overthrow *Sodom*, and *Gomorrha*, he will not conceal it from his servant *Abraham*, Gen. xviii. 17. *Joseph*, he is made acquainted with the future Condition of

E *Pharaoh* and *Egypt*. He foretells *Daniel* the great turnings, and changes in the World; the rising, and falling of all the great Monarchies, that should sway on the Earth. That Universal Famine over all the World, under *Claudius Cæsar*, not any of the Sages of the Empire foresaw it; but *Agabus*, a poor Prophet of *Jerusalem*, forewarns the Saints of it. 'Tis his love to his Church to disclose his counsels, and purposes to them. *Daniel*, the *beloved Prophet*, and *John*

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the *beloved Apoſtle*; their Prophecies foretell the Fates and Deſtinies of all Ages to come. A

And as 'tis Love to them, ſo 'tis his Care for them, to ſettle, and ſupport them againſt future Events. *Theſe things have I told you* (ſaith Chriſt) *that when the time ſhall come, you may remember, that I told you* of them; John xvi. 4. Why? what comfort is in that? to hear aforehand of trouble, and affliction? Much no doubt; it prepares, and fits them for it. Sodain ſurprizals are much more uncomfortable than expected Events. It aſſures us, that our ſufferings are ordered by God, that they are not the Caſualties of blinde Fortune, or the Violence of unreaſonable men; but the Holy Diſpoſals of our gracious God. B

This Meſſage to *Zerubbabel*, 'tis not only a *Prophecy*: But

Secondly, 'Tis a *Promiſe* alſo. And a *Promiſe* doth *Sonare in melius*, it betokens good to him. The Affairs of the *Jews*, at this time, were in a ſad condition: their eyes beheld the miſerable Decays, and the poor Repairs of their City and Temple; all their State was at a very low Ebb. Indeed now the Tide was turning: they were come out of Captivity; but yet things went ſo hard with them, ſuch poor beginnings of their Church, and State; the Nations about them, all maligning, and hindring their work: that *Zerubbabel*'s Heart might fail, and deſpair even to ſee himſelf, or his people in their former condition. To hold up his heart here, God ſeals up a *promiſe* to him; that he will not only ſupport, but advance him, and put honour upon him. C

In the pooreſt condition, the Church of God is rich in Promiſes: and he is not a *poor* man, that hath *rich* men to his Debtors; though deſtitute of preſent ſupplies, that hath Bonds, and Specialties, and good debts in abundance. *Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things? Zerubbabel* hath layd the Foundation, and he ſhall finiſh the Work: he ſhall *ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and the work of the* LORD *ſhall proſper in his hands.* D

And then the Text.

Thirdly, 'Tis *promiſsio de remuneratione*; 'tis a reward aſſured to *Zerubbabel*, for what he had done. He had been zealous for his *God*, for his *Temple*, and *Worſhip*: God doth not only accept it, but promiſes to reward it. *Quorum acceptator Deus, eorum & remunerator*, ſaith *Tertullian*. This kinde of ſervice is graciouſly accepted, and ſhall be fully rewarded. *Honorantes me honorabo*: He that advances *God*'s honour, God will advance his. Doth *David* ſet himſelf to build God an Houſe? God requites his good Intentions: *I will build thee an houſe*, ſaith God. What comfort, and confidence did this kinde of ſervice bring to *Nehemiah*? *I contended with the Rulers, and ſaid, Why is the houſe of God forſaken?* Neh. xiii. 11. He reproves the Sacrilege, and compells them to pay their Tythes to the Temple; and then his heart rejoyces in it; *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds, that I have done for the houſe of my God, and for the Officers thereof. Lord, remember* David *and all his* E

afflicti-

A *afflictions:* What were they? his pains, and toils, and troubles, to ſupport the Worſhip of his God; not only to *do* for his Church, but to *ſuffer* for it; *Remember Lord, the afflictions of* David; *and the ſure mercies of* David *ſhall be peformed to him.*

So then you ſee the Text, 'tis a Royal Charter, made to *Zerubbabel*, the great Reſtorer of the Worſhip of God, and in it a Promiſe of his future advancement. Though, withall, I know the Text is, by Expoſitors in a myſtical ſenſe underſtood of *Chriſt*; as *Auguſtine* ſaith well, that then we underſtand ſuch Prophecies aright, and in their full extent, when we finde *Chriſt* in them. He is the *great Anointed of the Lord*, the *true Zerubbabel*; The *Signet* and *Diadem*, and B the *throne* of *David* were preſerved for him; His *right* it is, and to *Him* it ſhall be given.

But this hinders not the literal, and more immediate intendment of it to *Zerubbabel*; nor the proportionable application to thoſe, who are, as *Zerubbabel* was, the Captains, and Rulers of God's People, and the *Lord's Anointed*. We take it in this ſenſe; yet ſtill reſerving τὰ πρωτεῖα *Chriſto*, that *he in all things may have the preheminence, who is the Bleſſed and only Potentate, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*; before whom *Zerubbabel* and *David*, and all the Kings C of the Earth muſt caſt down their Crowns, and do homage to him. But under Him, and for Him, and by His conceſſion, the Text is a Royal Charter made to *Zerubbabel*: And it ſtands upon theſe Particulars;

Firſt, Here is the Time ſet, when this ſhall betide him, *In die illa, In that day.*

Secondly, The Perſon to be advanced, *Zerabbabel my ſervant, the Son of* Shealtiel.

Thirdly, The Author of this advancement, and that is God. *I will take thee, and I will make thee, and I have choſen thee*; 'tis God, and D God only. Then,

Fourthly, The Advancement it ſelf, *I will make thee as a Signet.*

Fifthly, Here is the Ground and Reaſon, and withall the ſtability of this advancement, *For I have choſen thee.* And then,

Sixthly, and Laſtly, Here is the ratification of this Promiſe, the great aſſurance of this advancement, 'tis *in verbo Regis*, 'tis ſealed with the Seal of the living God. Nay, it paſſes *three Seals*; the ratification is thrice repeated, to make it more firm; *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*; and again, *Saith the Lord*; and yet the third time he ſeals it with the Broad-ſeal of Heaven, *Saith the Lord of Hoſts.*

E Firſt, *In die illa*; that's the firſt particular; the Time, and Date, when this Charter ſhall take place; and that's ſet down in the former *verſe*: a day of overthrowing the Thrones, and Kingdoms of the Heathen, when the Chariots, and Horſes, and Riders ſhall come down; nay, when Heaven and Earth ſhall be ſhaken, then, *In that day* ſhall *Zerubbabel* be exalted.

And this Circumſtance hath a three-fold force in it;

I. It

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I. It hath the force of a Suppoſition; *Etſi*, Though all the world be in an uproar, and confuſion, yet *Zerubbabel* ſhall be exalted. A

II. It hath the force of a Condition; *Potiùs*, Rather, than *Zerubbabel* ſhall not be exalted, all the Thrones of the Heathen ſhall be overturned.

III. It hath the force of a fixed Reſolution, and Determination; *Quando*, when that day comes, that the Nations ſhall be viſited, then *Zerubbabel* ſhall be remembred, his Throne ſhall be advanced.

I. Take it as a Suppoſition; *Etſi*, though all the world be in an uproar, and confuſion, in the greateſt diſturbances, *Zerubbabel* ſhall be ſafe, his throne eſtabliſhed. B

And this Suppoſition, 'tis not meerly imaginary; 'Tis neither impoſſible, nor improbable, to ſee confuſions and uproars in the world. We muſt not ξενίζεσθαι, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks, think it no *ſtrange thing*, to ſee this lower Region full of ſtorms and tempeſts, wars and rumours of wars, *Nation riſing againſt Nation. The raging of the Sea, and the noiſe of the Waves, and the madneſs of the People*, the Pſalmiſt puts them together: and that tells us the World is ſubject to Tumults, as the Sea is to Tempeſts. There are thoſe *Venti Typhonici*, reſtleſs, and violent ſpirits, whoſe work is to take *peace from the Earth*, and to caſt all into confuſion. C

Well, ſuppoſe all this: *Zerubbabel* in the worſt times hath a Charter of ſafety. God's Church, and ſervants, and the defenders of them, are under a ſpecial protection. When God ſends his Judgments into the World, he gives them a charge, as *David* did to his Souldiers, concerning his ſon *Abſalom*; *Entreat* Zerubbabel *well, let no man harm him, or do violence to him.*

Thus *David* brings in the world in a tumult, *Pſal.* ii. 1, 6. *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? yet have I ſet my King upon my holy hill of* Sion; *David*, and the Son of *David*, are ſecured againſt them. D

The Pſalmiſt delighted to put theſe Caſes, to imagine the worſt, and to ſtrengthen his faith againſt them; *Pſal.* xlvi. 2. *We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea.* In the greateſt Earth-quakes his Throne ſhall ſtand faſt. See the courage of his Faith in that unnatural rebellion, that *Abſalom* raiſed againſt him. *Pſal.* iii. 6. He defies them all, be they never ſo many, *I will not be afraid of ten thouſands, that have ſet themſelves againſt me:* nay, more than ſo; ſee the holy ſecurity of his Faith, in the midſt of theſe dangers; *I laid me down and ſlept,* E *for the Lord ſuſtained me.*

II. Conceive it as a Condition; *Potiùs*, Rather, than *Zerubbabel* ſhall miſcarry, he will overthrow, and tread down whatſoever ſhall oppoſe him; nay, more than ſo, to effect the welfare, and proſperity of his Choſen, he will ſhake Heaven and Earth. The whole Creation is not too coſtly a piece to redeem them from adverſity.

Zerub-

A *Zerubbabel*'s advancement met with ſtrong oppoſitions. The Prophet *Zechary* compares them to an high Mountain. *What art thou, O thou great Mountain? before* Zerubbabel *thou ſhalt become a Plain.* Zech. iv. 7. He will level, and lay flat all oppoſitions, that are made againſt him.

God, as he is God of Nature, and Governour of the World, is mercifull to all his Creatures, delights not in *afflicting the ſons of men:* But when they come in compariſon with, or ſtand in oppoſition to the welfare of his Church; they are all vile in his eyes. Rather than his *Zerubbabel* ſhall miſcarry, he will part with all of
B them. Thus *Eſay* ſhews, how highly he values his choſen Ones, chap. xliii. 3. *I gave* Egypt *for thy ranſom*, Ethiopia *and* Saba *for thee; ſince thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.* One *David*, one *Zerubbabel*, is more dear to God, than thouſands of Aliens, that malign, and oppoſe them.

III. This Clauſe hath the force of a fixed Reſolution, and Determination: 'tis *Quando*; it ſets down the time, when this promiſe to *Zerubbabel* ſhall be fully performed. And it hath three gradual periods.

C 1. *In die adverſitatis*; When all other Nations ſhall ſuffer adverſity, then he will take care of *Zerubbabel*, preſerve, and proſper him. Uſually, when he afflicts his Church, he ſuffers the men of this world to enjoy proſperity; and ſo on the contrary, when their day comes, he will remember his own, and do good unto them. The Sun of proſperity ſhines not at once upon both theſe Hemiſpheres. God ſets a pillar of Cloud 'twixt his own, and others; and 'tis uſually dark to one, when 'tis light to the others. *The world ſhall rejoyce, and ye ſhall weep*, ſaith Chriſt, John xvi. 20. *but your ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy, and they ſhall lament.* *David* tells us, the time of the
D Churches adverſity, 'tis but *till the pit be digged for the ungodly*, Pſal. xliv. 13. The *Ark* then riſes higheſt, when the World ſinks loweſt, and lies deepeſt under water.

2. *In die temporalis vindictæ*; When he ſhall revenge the oppreſſions of his Church upon their enemies, that will be the day of *Zerubbabel*'s advancement. Remarkable vengeance on the Churches enemies is uſually accompanyed with remarkable mercies to his own people. St. *Peter* obſerves it in thoſe two great Judgments on the Old World, and *Sodom*. When he plagued them extraordinarily, withall he ſaved his own in a wonderfull manner, and from thence concludes, *The Lord*
E *knows how to puniſh the one, and to preſerve the other.* Indeed, his Judgments to their enemies are Mercies to his people. *He ſlew mighty Kings*, Pharaoh, *and* Og, *and* Sihon: *for his mercy endures for ever*, Pſal. cxxxvi. Not only bleſſings upon themſelves, but judgments upon their enemies, are mercies to his ſervants.

When one wicked man oppreſſes another, God will revenge it, but 'tis in Wrath to the one, not in Mercy to the other; but the oppreſſions

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preſſions of his people are not only puniſhed upon their foes, but withall recompenſed, and requited with comfort to themſelves. That's the ſecond period; When the *Chaldæans* ſhall be plagued, then *Zerubbabel* ſhall be exalted. A

3. *In die extremi judicii*; that will be the great day of *Zerubbabel*'s exaltation. This *Promiſe* reaches to that time; till then, it hath not its full accompliſhment. All other his proceedings, they are *præjudicia extremi judicii*. He will plead the cauſe of his ſervants before; but then he will judge it, and fully juſtifie it. When all Thrones ſhall be caſt down, then the Throne of *David* ſhall be exalted. *In that day, when he makes up his Jewels*, Malach. iii. 17. *then he will remember* B Zerubbabel, *ſet him as a Signet on his right hand for ever.*

Indeed till then, neither *Zerubbabel* the Type, nor *Chriſt* preſigned by *Zerubbabel*, are in their full advancement. He is now upon his Throne, but his Foot-ſtool may ſeem in part to be wanting, *Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy Foot-ſtool*, Pſal. cx. 1. Then when the great ſhaking of Heaven and Earth ſhall be; then Chriſt, and his Vicegerents ſhall appear in glory.

I, this is the happineſs of Chriſtian Kingdoms: they ſhall not determin like others, in horrour and confuſion; but receive their full accompliſhment in the Kingdom of Chriſt: *Diis minoribus in unum* C *Jovem confuſis*, as the Heathen man expreſſes it. When Pagans, and Infidels ſhall be turned down to the Bar; true Chriſtian Princes ſhall be taken up, as Aſſeſſors on the Bench. Here on earth they reigned for him, and at that day ſhall joyfully give up their Kingdoms to him. Here Chriſt reigns in them, there they ſhall reign in him, and with him.

I proceed,

Secondly, To the *Perſon*, to whom this Charter is granted, that's *Zerubbabel my ſervant, the Son of* Shealtiel.

I. He is deſigned in his Perſon; and then, D

II. Deſcribed by his Relation.

I. He is deſigned in his Perſon. Here is a perſonal compellation, God calls him by Name, directs a ſpecial meſſage to him.

1. 'Tis *honourable*, thus to be owned of God by Name. *Zerubbabel*, and ſuch as he, are his great Vicegerents upon earth; they are no ſtrangers to him, they are the great Officers of his Kingdom; *De proximo noti*; their perſons, their names, all that belong to them, are precious unto him. They are like the great Conſtellations in Heaven, or Stars of the firſt magnitude; we have particular names for them, though the reſt we heed not. And then E

2. 'Tis *affectionate*, 'tis the language of Love; οἰκίας γνησίας ἐστὶ τὸ τιμᾶσθαι, to ſpeak in theſe perſonal, and familiar expreſſions. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith, 'Tis a ſign of diſpleaſure, either not to ſpeak at all; or, if one ſpeak to one, yet not to own him, and call him by Name. *I know thee by name*, ſaith God to *Moſes*, *and thou haſt found grace in my houſe*, Exod. xxxiii. 12. *I have called thee by Name, thou art mine*, ſaith God in *Eſay*. And then, 3. 'Tis

A 3. 'Tis *comfortable*, eſpecially in dangers, and diſtreſſes, when they beſet us, thus ſweetly and regardfully to be owned by Him. *Fear not* Abraham, *I am thy Buckler*; Gen. xv. 1. Thus *David* encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God, *Thou haſt known my ſoul in adverſity*; Pſal. xxxi. 7. *Fear not, thou Worm* Jacob; *Eſai.* xli. 14. *Be of good chear*, Paul, ſaid Chriſt to his perſecuted Apoſtle, Acts xxiii. 11. When *Jacob* was in diſtreſs, and begged, and wreſtled for a Bleſſing, a Bleſſing was aſſured him by the impoſition of his Name, *Thy Name ſhall be* Iſrael, *and thou ſhalt prevail.*

II. He is deſcribed by his Relation. God owns him for his Servant.
B And this is a Title of high Honour, and Dignity. Noble men are more honourable in their Court-attendances, and Services, to their Sovereign, than in all their commands in their own Countrey.

King *James*, recounting thoſe magnificent Titles, that the Scripture puts upon Kings and Princes, he glories in this, that they are ſtyled by God himſelf, *Servi Domini, The Lord's ſervants. Bellarmine* ſlights it as common and vulgar, ſcorns him, as *Michal* did *David*, when he thus miniſtred before the Lord; but that gracious Prince, who knew full well what belonged to Honour, makes his boaſt of it.

Indeed, however, in other reſpects, 'tis a Title communicable to
C every good Chriſtian; yet, by an ἐξοχὴ, 'tis appropriated to thoſe that are placed in Sovereign Authority. *Moſes my ſervant*, and *David my ſervant*, and *Zerubbabel my ſervant*. A Title, in point of Magiſtracy, and Authority, given by God to thoſe, that are of immediate ſubordination to Himſelf, and ſupreme to all others. And 'tis Wiſdom and Duty to preſerve theſe Titles of Honour, to whom they are due. The ſtyle of Kings and Princes, 'tis like the holy Oyl of the Sanctuary, with which they are anointed; no Confection muſt be made like to it. *Veritas nominum*, 'tis *Salus proprietatum*; Titles given by God, are real Conveyances, and (with the Cardinals good
D leave) muſt not be placed upon inferiour Subſtitutes.

So then *Zerubbabel* is God's Servant,

1. *Officio.* The great calling of Princes, 'tis an Office, and Service, that they perform to God. St. *Paul* ſtiles them Διακονοὶ, and Λειτουργοὶ Θεῦ, God's Servants, and Miniſters. Magiſtracy and Soveraignty, 'tis no Intruſion, or Uſurpation, as *Korah* and his Complices would have had it eſteemed; as if *Moſes* and *Aaron* had lifted up themſelves above their Brethren. Were it an Uſurpation, 'twere good to be rid of it; or, were it an Aberration from ſome better Order, 'twere fit to remedy it; or, were it ſome proviſional ſupply for a time only, it might
E eſtſoons ceaſe, and give place unto another. None of all theſe: 'tis an Office of Prime and Original Inſtitution. The Apoſtle calls it *an Ordinance of God. David* compares it to the *Ordinance of the Sun and Moon*: The Sun in the Original Tongue, 'tis called a Servant; but yet a Servant to rule and govern, and give Light to the World.

Zerubbabel is God's Servant,

2. *Speciali functione.* The Service which *Zerubbabel* did per-

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form, 'tis the great ſervice, that's done to God above other employments. The building of the Temple, the reſtoring of the Worſhip of God to its Native beauty; 'tis a work belongs to *Zerubbabel*, the principal ſervice, that God expects from him, and ſuch as he is. The *Jews* have a Saying, That the Keyes of the Temple were lay'd every Night under *Solomon*'s Pillow, they belonged to his Charge; they were not to hang at the High-Prieſt's Girdle. Then Kings do ſerve God, as Kings, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, when they do that ſervice, which none but Kings can do to him. *Serviunt Reges* Chriſto, *leges ferendo pro* Chriſto. To eſtabliſh Religion as a Law, 'tis the King's great Service: *Quis, mente ſobriùs, Regibus dicat, Non ad vos pertinet curare, à quo tueatur, aut oppugnetur Eccleſia; quis velit eſſe ſive religioſus, ſive ſacrilegus?* To maintain and uphold Religion; to defend, and ſafeguard the Church from oppreſſion, to ſee men be Religious, not to ſuffer them to be Sacrilegious; that's the great Service, that belongs to Kings.

Zerubbabel is God's Servant,

3. *Gratioſâ acceptatione.* God graciouſly owns, and accepts his ſervice; approves his Fidelity, allows the diſcharge of his Truſt committed to him. *Zerubbabel* met with thoſe, that queſtioned and quarrelled at his proceedings, as *Ezra* reports of him. Well; let others malign him, here is his comfort, his God, whom he ſerves, reſpects, and accepts him.

'Tis the lot of theſe Servants, and Miniſters of God, to be liable to the quarrels of diſaffected men. *Moſes* met with contradictions; even his own Kindred, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*, began to malign him. And *David*, though for a time, the People had loyal and honourable thoughts of him (*Whatſoever the King did, pleaſed all the People*, 2 Sam iii. 36.) yet Diſcontents aroſe againſt his Government. *Abſalom* could charge him with Neglect of his Kingly Office. Well; what ſaid God of him? He approves his Service, commends his Fidelity. *He fed them with a faithfull and true heart, and ruled them prudently with his power*; that's the Teſtimony God's Spirit gave of him, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 72.

So *Solomon*'s Government was complained of, as heavy and burthenſom: and yet all the burthens we read of, were, that he laded the People with a ſurcharge of wealth. Thoſe Levies, and Taxes for the building of the Temple, and the Royal Palace, which ſome conceive the People complained of, were not impoſed upon the *Iſraelites*, but only upon Aliens, and Strangers, that lived amongſt them; 2 *Chron.* ii. 18.

The Spirit, that's in us, luſteth to envy; and it ſhews it ſelf no where more, than towards our Superiours. Oh, Brethren! we ſhould conſider their Temptations, and compaſſionate their Difficulties, and pity their Failings, and pray for their good Proceedings, and acknowledge the Bleſſings we enjoy by them. They may ſometimes over-drip us, but they are a ſhelter to us. As *Tully* ſaith of the *Sicilians*,

Sicilians, They enjoyed those benefits by the *Roman* Government, that they would not be quarrelling for petty grievances.

Zerubbabel is God's Servant,

4. *Exclusivè*. His servant, and His servant only; no servant of others. This Interest of God cuts off all claim, that any other would lay to him, to have him their servant. The King's Authority, 'tis πρῶτον ἀξίωμα, the Supreme Dignity, ὑπὲρ ἣν ἄλλο ἀνώτερον, saith *Chrysostom*; it hath no Peer, much less superiour. The *Signet* in the Text, 'tis not *annulus Piscatoris*; 'tis neither St. *Peters*, nor the Pope's Signet. Dominion, 'tis the Image of God, not of the Pope. Indeed, when the Imperial power turned Vassal to the Pope, the Scripture calls it *Imago Bestiæ*, the Image of the Beast: but lawfull Sovereignty, 'tis a most legible Print of the Image of God, a derivation from him, and a substitution under him.

'Tis true, there is a serving in Government, and an hard service too; which made *Fulgentius* utter that Speech; *Facilius est Imperatoribus obedire, quàm obedientibus imperare*. The Subjects part is the easier of the twain; an easier matter to obey, than to rule and govern. And St. *Augustine*, considering the hard task of Government, confesses, *Magis propriè servus est, qui præest, quàm qui subest*. And, if you will go further; *Superiores* do *servire Utilitati*, but not *Potestati*: they are servants to the good and profit of their Inferiours; but not to their Power. Not like the Pope, that can hear his Canonists say, *Ecclesia data est Papæ*: The Church, 'tis the Pope's *Demeasns*; meant, and intended for his profit only. *Gerson* reproves that Speech; brings in the Church, telling the Pope; *Ego non sum tua, sed tu meus es: omnia enim mea sunt*. The Church saith, she is not for the Pope; but the Pope for the Church, and must seek the good of it. *Aquine* decides this Question, *How Superiours may be said to be Servants*: He is properly a Servant, that is so *& respectu principii, & respectu finis*; that hath his employment from another, and for another. Now Sovereign Powers have their employment from God, and by his Authority, and so are his Servants only: but *respectu finis*, the End of their employment is to be beneficial, and serviceable to the good of others, as St. *Augustine* expresses it, *Ecclesiæ utilitatibus servit, qui non tam præsse, quàm prodesse desiderat*. St. *Paul* doth fully resolve it, *Rom.* xiii. 4. *Dei minister est tuo bono. They are God's Ministers for our good.*

This Truth, that Princes are God's Servants, 'tis *monitorium officii*; the serious thought of this will reminde them of their Duty, so to govern, as withall to remember they are under Government. *Omne sub regno graviore regnum est.*

I know it is a prepostrous Solecism to preach to the People the duty of Kings, and then to Kings the duty of their People. 'Twas the *Pharisees* method, and μεθοδεία too: when they finde fault with Christ, they complain to his Disciples of him; *Why does your Master eat with Publicans and Sinners?* Mark ii. 16. There they accuse Christ

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to his Disciples; and then anon, *Verse* 18. they accuse the Disciples to Christ; *Why do not thy Disciples fast as well as others?* Just the spirit of a *Pharisee*, to beget jealousies, and to sow dissention; tell the King, that his Subjects are false to him; and then tell the People, the King usurps upon them. Sure this is not διθοτομεῖν, to give every one his due portion. *Alia medicina sanat calcaneum, alia medicina curat oculum*, saith *Gerson*; every Truth is not for every person. A

This, that Princes are God's servants, 'twill secure their persons, seals up to them a Patent of protection. The Master is bound in point of honour to safe-guard his servant, and to keep him from wrong. King *David* pleads this privileg, *Be surety for thy servant for good, let not the proud oppress me*, Psal. cxix. 122. So King *Hezekiah* in his affliction, *Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me. David* prefixes this title in his Psalm of deliverance; *A Psalm of* David, *the servant of the Lord, when he was delivered from all his enemies.* B

As it gives security to them, so it puts a restraint upon us; it will binde us all to good observance; nay, it will bridle our Tongues, that they offer not an unreverent word against them. *How durst you speak against my servant* Moses? *Num.* xii. 8. A check, it was given by God, not to the common sort of Murmurers; but to two, that were some-body amongst the people for sanctity, and authority; to *Aaron*, and *Miriam*. And God, calling him his Servant, taught *Aaron* not to call him his Fellow-servant; but he learns κυριολογεῖν, he forthwith calls him, *My Lord* Moses. C

So then, this description of *Zerubbabel*, Zerubbabel *my servant*, it points out unto us three excellencies in that Government God here institutes, and sets over his people.

First, In his *person*: here is Monarchy.

Secondly, In his *birth* and *parentage*: here is Nobility.

Thirdly, In his *descent*: Here is lineal, and hereditary Succession in the Royal Family. Three great excellencies of Royal Sovereignty. D

First, In his Person; here is Monarchy, the Supreme Authority stated, and setled in one. Monarchy hath this prescription, and advantage, above all other forms of Government; it carries a more evident stamp of Divine institution, than any other. *Exemplum habet de cælo*, as *Gregory* speaks of Church-Government. We condemn no other Forms; they are not aberrations: but yet we justly magnifie and prefer the Model, which God himself made for his own chosen people.

The *Israelites* had their Judges, but they were but occasional, and provisional: but the settlement of the State was to be in Kings. Indeed, their first King, *Saul*, was extorted by the people; but that hinders not, but that the Royal Office was of prime intendment. It was promised to *Abraham* and *Sarah*, Gen. xvii. 16. *Kings of People shall be born of her.* The Royal Charter was drawn up by *Moses* long before *Saul*'s time, *Deut.* xvii. *Moses* himself was a King in *Jesburun*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 5. That, which blemish'd the setting up of *Saul*, was the E

Peoples

A Peoples over-hasty desire to enjoy a King. Both the *Sauls*, *Saul* the King, and *Saul* the Apostle, they were both ἐκτρώματα, *born out of due time*; the one too soon, the other too late: but both their functions of Divine Institution.

Secondly, Observe *Zerubbabel's* Birth, and Parentage: there is a second excellency in that: that is, his Nobility, the son of *Shealtiel*, of the seed Royal. Nobility, 'tis not only a Dignity amongst men, but God takes notice of it, and puts honour upon it. 'Tis one of the old symptoms of the worst Times, (*quæ tempora jam non instant, sed extant*, as *Bernard* speaks) when the Vile rise up against the Noble,
B and put contempt upon them. *Esai.* iii. 5. *The Child shall behave himself proudly against the Antient, and the Base against the Honourable.*

Especially, Nobility is the Quarry, out of which God raises the Captain of his people: *Blessed art thou, O Land, when thy King is the son of Nobles*, Eccles. x. 17. 'Twas Queen *Elizabeth's* answer to those that desired Her to acknowledg Her Successor, *Thronus meus est Thronus Regum; nolim ut Vilis succedat mihi.*' Twas the Philosophers precept, Τυραννίς ἀγενῶν ἀρχειν: and again, Οἱ ἰσχυροὶ ἀξιοῦνται τιμῆς. Nobility gives a great capacity for Rule, and Authority. 'Twas God's curse on the *Philistines*, *A Bastard shall Rule over them*, Zech. ix. 6.
C The Philosopher saith, Men of place must not be taken ὡς τυχοῦσιν not every shoo-buckle be made a Signet. *Tobias* the servant, is not a fit man to sway the Scepter: διὰ τὸ διαφθεῖρειν τὸ σπέρμα, he is of too base an Alloy. *Jehoash* his Thistle, 2 *King.* xiv. *Jotham's* Bramble, *Judg.* ix. *Abimelech*, the son of an hand-maid, not to be thought on for that high Dignity.

Thirdly, As God here establishes *Zerubbabel's* Monarchy, and raises it out of Nobility, so he settles it here in a constant Succession, makes it Hereditary. *Shealtiel* comes by a lineal descent, from the loins of *David*. St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, deduce *Zerubbabel* from
D that Royal pedigree. *David* calls this the establishment of his Throne; *Thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come*, 2 Sam. vii. 19. God hath been carefull to maintain this lineal descent; Rather *Joash*, a Childe of seven years old, shall be placed in the Throne, than this succession be interrupted, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 1.

'Twas that which troubled *Hezekiah* most, that, if he had dyed of his great sickness, he had left no heir of the Crown behind him. If *Coniah* dye childless, yet reserve the Diadem for him whose right it is, to whom it belongs, *Ezek.* xxi. 27. 'Twas one exception they took against *Herod*; *Nec nascendo, nec vivendo meruit regnum*: he wanted both Birth and Breeding, to make him a King.

This Hereditary Succession prevents those mischiefs, which a *Vacuum* would bring upon a State and Kingdom. *Vacuum*, we know, will have strange operations; it will make a clot of Earth, or lump of Lead mount upwards, to fill a void place. Every body will be stepping into an empty Throne. When Kingdoms have become *hæreditates caducæ*, as the Lawyers term them, the *Pope* hath been ready

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ready to Eſcheat them to himſelf: That uſurping King of Nations hath laid claim to them. A

I paſs to the

Third particular of the Text, the *Author* of *Zerubbabel's* advancement: and that's no other than God himſelf. *I will take thee*, and *I will make thee*, and *I have choſen thee*. He is the fountain of all lawfull Authority. *The Shields of the Earth belong unto God.* Soveraignty, 'tis a Beam of his Majeſty. *Promotion comes neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from any point of the Compaſs*: 'tis God that ſets up, and appoints Magiſtracy. 'Tis Διοπτὴς, an Image of God, that comes down from Heaven. B

The Writ, by which they are made and authorized, it iſſues out from Heaven. Our Saviour tells us ſo, *John* x. 34. *It's written in your law, I ſaid ye are Gods; He called them Gods, to whom the word of God came*, ſaith our Saviour. 'Tis he, that makes them; we muſt have no Gods of our own making. The Oyl that anoynts them, 'tis God's Oyl; *With mine holy Oyl have I annoynted him*, Pſal. lxxxix. The Throne they are placed upon, 'tis God's Throne, 1 *Chron.* xx. *Solomon ſat on the Throne of the Lord.* The judgment they execute, 'tis God's judgment, *Deut.* i. 17. The Kingdom they govern, 'tis God's Kingdom; *The Kingdom is God's*, ſaith *Daniel*, *and to whom he will give it.* Dan. iv. 25. Hence is it that they are called *the ſons of God: Ye are all the ſons of the moſt High.* Upon his Thigh is written, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. E femore deſcendunt*, that betokens their high deſcent, and dignity. C

And this well conſidered, that Kings and Princes are authorized by God, will prove matter of comfort to us, that the Government we live under is of God's Inſtitution. God will bleſs his own Ordinances. Man's Inventions, be they never ſo wiſe, have no ſuch Promiſes as Gods Inſtitutions. They that ſet up *Abimelech* without this warrant, took a great content in him for a while; they rejoyced in *Abimelech*, and *Abimelech* rejoyced in them: but you know how little it laſted, and how ſadly it ended. But if He ſet one over us, let us never queſtion, or doubt, *how can this man ſave us? Gideon*, he ſuſpected himſelf, and *Moſes* before him, ſhrunk at the burthen of being a Governour, but both of them proſpered, becauſe God authorized them. D

We have ſeen the *Author*: Come we

Fourthly, to the *Dignity*, and *advancement* it ſelf, *I will make thee as a Signet*; *Ut Annulus ſignatorius*: He ſhall be to God as his Sealring. The expreſſion 'tis ſymbolical. Literally in it ſelf no great matter, as *Bernard*, in another caſe, *Annulus iſte nihil valet; hæreditas eſt, quam expecto.* That which it betokens, and conveyes, makes it ſo precious; *Materiam ſuperabat opus*; the uſe exceeds the coſt. And here it ſerves for a threefold purpoſe, it carries with it a three-fold ſignificancy; E

Firſt, *Annulus*, 'tis *inſigne authoritatis*, 'tis the ſeal, and teſtimony, and conveyance of Authority. Inveſtitures into chief Offices were given by a Ring. 'Tis τῆς ἀρχῆς σημεῖον, an Enſign of *Government*.

'Twas

A 'Twas the Ceremony of *Joſeph*'s advancement; *Pharaoh* took off his Ring, and put it on *Joſeph*'s hand, and *made him Ruler over all the Land of* Egypt, Gen. xli. 42. And *Alexander* the Great deſigned his Succeſſour by the delivery of his Ring. The Councel of *Baſil* forbad any to wear a Ring, *Niſi cui competit ex officio. Tully* ſaith, *Sit annulus tuus non miniſter alienæ voluntatis, ſed teſtis tuæ*; it betokens Command, and Authority.

So then, *Zerubbabel* is the *Signet* of God, hath the Impreſs and Signature of Supreme Authority. 'Twas the Royal Charter, *Without thee ſhall no man lift up his hand or foot, in the Land of* Egypt. All other
B ſubordinate Authority muſt paſs this Seal, and be derived from it; as *Ambroſe* ſaith of the Ring given to *Joſeph*, *Annulus datur* Joſepho, *ut ille alios ſignet*. All other Governours *are ſent by him*, ſaith St. *Peter*; but the King is Supreme. Let the Metal be what it will, without this ſignature, it carries no Authority.

Secondly, *Annulus*, 'tis *in ornatum*, Rings are for Ornament: the Robe and the Ring were brought out for Ornament, *Luke* xv. And ſuch is the Magiſtrates Power and Authority, 'tis the beauty of the Creation, the Luſtre and Ornament of the great Workmanſhip of God. *He made the Sun to rule the day, the Moon and the Stars to rule by night.* The
C ſplendour of thoſe great Lights, is the beauty of the Creatures; take them out of the World, and what remains but horrour and confuſion? See how God deſcribes the beauty of his People, *Ezek.* xvi. *I deckt thee with Silver and Gold, and thou waſt exceeding beautiful, and thou didſt proſper into a Kingdom.*

A due proportion of ſovereignty, and ſubjection, 'tis the beauty of the Body Politick: And as all good Government hath its comlineſs, ſo the *Kingly* Government excells in beauty. God's Providence ſhines more glorious in them. As 'tis for his Glory to uſe the Miniſtery of Angels to govern the World, (thoſe *ſpiritual thrones, and dominions, and powers*,
D as the Scripture calls them) ſo it ſets forth the Glory of his Kingdom, that he governs his Church and People, by Kings and Princes. *All thy Princes are Kings*; 'twas ſpoke to the honour of the King of *Aſſyria*, *Eſay* x. They are his *anointed Cherubs*, Ezek. xxviii. as the greater Conſtellations in the Firmament of the World. *Solomon* reckons them amongſt thoſe goodly, and comely Creatures that he wondred at, *A King, againſt whom there is no riſing up*, Prov. xxx.

There is yet a *Third* purpoſe of Good to *Zerubbabel* in making a *Signet*.

Thirdly, 'Tis *ob Cuſtodiam*, it betokens *care* and *cuſtody*; He will
E keep him, and hold him, and preſerve him as a Signet. He ſhall be in his Eye, and Remembrance, as is the Signet which a man wears about him. His great Vicegerents are like the Jewels of the Crown; they have a more ſpecial intereſt in his Care and Providence.

And this Care and Cuſtody the Scripture expreſſes by the keeping of a Signet; and it mentions three places, in which God ſets, and keeps this Signet for the greater ſafety.

1. The

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1. The first is *Dextra*; They are to Him as *His Signet on his right hand*; that's the usual manner of wearing of Signets. *How shall we magnifie Zerubbabel?* saith the Son of *Syrac*; *He was a Signet on the right hand. Custodia dextræ*, that's the more usual, and ordinary preservation of them. They always need it; the many casualties and cross incidents into the life of man, Princes are liable to them, did not this Hand of the most High keep and defend them. He watches over them sleeping, and he guards them waking. Their going forth, and their coming in, in all the passages, and turnings of their Lives, his good hand must be over them. They are *Viri dextræ*, as *David* accompts them, *Psal.* lxxx. *Let thy right hand be upon the man of thy right hand.* This *manu-tenentia divina* is that, by which they are held, and supported. A B

II. But there are extraordinary Cases of Hazards; and they require more powerfull preservations; for them he hath a stronger place to keep, and defend them, that's *in Brachio*: *Pone me ut sigillum in brachio*, Cant. viii. 6. He sets them as a Seal and Signet on His Arm. Besides the Preservations of his *Hands*, He hath for his Anointed ones the Deliverances of His *Arm*, of His *strong Arm*, of His *out-stretched Arm*, of His *Arm of salvation*, to shelter them from daily miscarriages. *David*'s Faith makes God his House; that, we say, is a man's Castle, for his daily safety. *Be thou my Habitation, whereto I may daily resort*, Psal. lxxi. 3. 'Tis he, that makes *David dwell in safety*, Psal. iv. 8. But in days of trouble and distress, when *the Blast of the terrible ones is as a Storm against a wall*, then this Providence is not ony an House to shelter him, but a Sanctuary to preserve him; then he entrenches himself within this more powerfull Divine Custody. *The* LORD *is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer, my Strength, my Buckler, and the Horn of my salvation, and my high Tower*, Psal. xviii. 2. For ordinary Preservations, *Let thy Hand be upon the man of thy right hand*; but in the days of great dangers, then *Awake, awake, put on strength, thou Arm of the* LORD: then both His right hand, and His holy Arm must be stretched out for him. C D

III. There is yet a closer, and surer place for Custody; and that's *in Corde*: *Pone me ut sigillum in Corde*; *Set me as a Seal, and Signet on thine Heart*; Cant. viii. 6. That implies τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῆς οἰκειότητος much care and custody. *Cor*, 'tis *repositorium amoris*; the Heart, 'tis Love's Cabinet, where it keeps her Jewels; and Love is a sure and faithfull Keeper. *Set me as a Seal upon thine heart*; *for Love is as strong as death*, saith *Solomon*; it will not part with that it loves. 'Tis that, which strengthens both Hand and Arm, and stretches them out for *Zerubbabel*'s preservation. There is no snatching him out of His hands. Indeed he can slip off *Coniah* from his hand, and cast him away. *Jer.* xxii. 24. *Sed nemo eripiet*; none else can do it: much less can they wring him out of His Arm; but least of all can they pluck him from His Heart. The force of the Hands, and the folding of the Arms; they are both as fences to keep off violence from the heart: his hand shall hold him fast, and his arm shall strengthen him, and his heart shall be as an hiding-place, and Sanctuary to him. E

And

A And, to make this more ſure, here is a ſure Foundation lay'd for it in the Fifth particular of the Text; that's God's Choice and Election; *For I have choſen thee.* That's the firſt Original Cauſe. This *Foundation of God remains ſure, and hath this Seal, Novit Dominus qui ſunt ſui*; 2 Tim. ii. 19. This Election 'tis *ſignum ſignans*; the Advancement promiſed, 'tis *ſigillum ſignatum*, 'tis but an Impreſſion of the firſt Seal.

This Election, 'tis like the Great Stone in *Jeremy*, that was to ſupport *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Throne; *Behold, I will ſet his Throne upon this Stone, that I have hid, and he ſhall ſpread his Royal Pavilion over it*, Jer. xliii. 10. 'Tis as the *building upon the Rock*; let the ſtorms riſe, and
B the winds blow, this Rock of Election will ſtrongly ſupport it. In that day, when there ſhall be a ſhaking of all other Kingdoms, this Foundation ſhall not be ſhaken. It will make *Zerubbabel*'s Kingdom, Βασιλειαν ἀσάλευτον, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in alluſion to this Prophecy.

So then the Deſignment to this Government, 'tis *ex Electione*. *Zerubbabel* holds by this Title of God's Choice and Election; take it in theſe Particulars.

1. 'Tis, *ex Electione*; *non ex Permiſſione tantùm*. Kings reign by God's Election; not by his Permiſſion only; that's too weak and ſandy a Foundation. *Quod toleramus, non amamus*; ſaith St. *Auguſtine*.
C Permiſſion falls ſhort of Approbation. Kingdoms ariſe not *ex Fortuito concurſu Atomorum*, as he thought the World did; they are not carried with an hurry, but by God's ſteady Election. *In regno Providentiæ nihil permititur temeritati*, ſaith the Father. A careleſs Permiſſion bears no ſway in God's Adminiſtration. And *Luther* ſaid well, the *Spirit* of the Lord, that orders theſe Affairs, 'tis *Spiritus Conſilii, & non temeritatis*. The appointment of Kings and Princes, 'tis an Act of Election, and purpoſed Choice of God; not a matter of his Sufferance, and bare Permiſſion.

2. This Advancement, 'tis *ex Electione*; then 'tis *cum Rejectione*
D *aliorum*. The Election of one inferr's the Rejection of others. *Prælatio unius ſine rejectione alterius non poteſt procedere*. God's Choice muſt ſtand: all other Competitours are clearly rejected. 'Twas this, that transferred the Kingdom from *Saul*, *I have rejected him*; 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 'Twas the Election of God, that advanced *David*, and ſet *Eliab* by; *Anoint him not*; *for the* LORD *hath refuſed him*; Verſe 7. And, as it refuſed *Eliab*, ſo it diſplaced *Adonijah*: though all *Iſrael* ſet their faces to him, that he ſhould reign; yet the Kingdom was turned to *Solomon*: for it was his *from the Lord*, 1 Kings ii. 15. *Electio obtinuit* holds here too. All others, be they what they will be, in parts, in power, in fa-
E vour (*'tis not the Metal, but the engraving, and ſculpture that makes the Signet*) God's ſtamp of Election is wanting to them.

3. *Electio*; 'tis *ex Dilectione*. Election flows from Dilection; 'tis a fruit of Love. The Philoſopher tells us, 'tis *ex amore finis*; the delight, that God takes in the proſperity of his People, ſets Him on this courſe, to chooſe a King over them. Should we preſume to expoſtulate with God, as they did in *Malachy*, *Wherein haſt thou loved us?* This is an

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ample and evident conviction. We muſt be *evidentibus beneficiis ingrati*, as Saint *Auguſtine* ſpeaks, wretchedly unthankfull, if we acknowledg it not a clear teſtimony of his Love, thus to provide for us. A

See the acknowledgment, that the Queen of *Sheba* made of *Iſrael*'s happineſs, 2 Chron. ix. 8. *Bleſſed be the* LORD *thy God, which delighted in thee, to ſet thee on his Throne, to be King for the* LORD *thy God: becauſe thy God loved* Iſrael, *to eſtabliſh them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them, to do judgment, and juſtice.* Should we deny this to be a fruit of his Love; This Queen of the South would riſe up in judgment againſt us, her ſpeech would condemn us.

Indeed this Promiſe to *Zerubbabel*, 'tis a comprehenſive mercy; in bleſſing Him, God bleſſes the whole Nation. The Prince, he is an Head, a Fountain, a Root unto the People; all words of Influence, and conveyance. Life comes from the Head, Streams from the Fountain, Sap from the Root: an obſtruction in theſe brings deſtruction upon all. *Smite the Shepheard, and the ſheep will ſoon be ſcattered. Deſtroy the King of* Iſrael, ſaith the *Syrian*: that's a quick way to ruine all. B

4. *Electio*; 'tis *cum deliberatione*. Election implies ſtudy, and ſearch, and deliberation. We muſt conceive it θεοπρεπῶς, leave out the imperfections of this act, and take all the perfections; that is, he doth it exactly, by the depth of his Wiſdom, by the fore-caſts of his Counſel, with the fulneſs of his Reſolution, all things conſidered. The appointing of Rulers over his People, 'tis with conſultation. His making of a King, 'tis like *Faciamus hominem*, 'tis done *per modum conſilii*, with a great conſideration. C

This work, 'tis one of the high points of State in God's Government of the World; none of the lower ſort of actions: as if any that comes next to hand, might ſerve for this employment. God pitches on *Zerubbabel*, as *Pharaoh* did on *Joſeph*; he ſaid to his ſervants, *Can we finde ſuch an one as this is? there is none like unto him*, Gen. xli. 38. D

Thus we ſee, God makes ſearch for a fit man to Govern, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 14. *The* LORD *hath ſought him a man after his own heart, to be Captain over his People.* He makes a Scrutiny among *Jeſſe*'s ſons, and then, after this ſearch, and ſcrutiny, he concludes, that *he had found* David *his ſervant. I have provided me a King amongſt* Jeſſe's *ſons*, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 1.

5. *Electio*; 'tis *perſonalis*: it fixes upon the Perſon. *Electio*, 'tis *quorum*, not *qualium* only; 'tis not a bare Preſcription of a Form, or a ſanction of the Power only; but it is a deſignation of the Perſon alſo. *I have choſen thee*, ſaith the Text. *Te dicit, perſonam.* He doth not only inſtitute the Office, and frame the Model, and ſtabliſh the Power; but ſingles out *Zerubbabel* for the man, to whom he commits it. God chooſes not meer qualities, and forms, and notions, ſets not up a *Platonical Idæa*: but inveſts the Perſon, makes that Sacred. 'Tis one thing to diſtinguiſh in notion, another thing to divide in action, and reality, the Perſon, and the Office. E

And

A And then,

Sixthly, For confirmation of all, he ratifies the promiſe, *in verbo Regis. He hath ſpoken it, and he will make it good.* This Promiſe, 'tis not like a Papal grant: he will take upon him to give, and diſpoſe Kingdoms, he will give the Title; but, if they mean to enjoy it, they muſt fight for it themſelves, look for no aſſiſtance from him: But the *LORD of Hoſts* will make it good to him.

A glorious Title it is, and uſual in the Prophets. But, 'tis obſervable, thoſe three, which propheſied after the return from Captivity, *Haggai*, *Zechary*, and *Malachy*, when the State of the *Jews* was at the
B loweſt, do moſt frequently uſe it. They ſcarcely ever name *God*, but with this Title of Power, *The LORD of Hoſts.*

When *Zerubbabel* and his people are at the weakeſt; then God offers himſelf, and his help at the fulleſt. This Title, it compaſſes him, as a Life-guard round about; it ſtands in the front of the Text, as in the fore-ward; and again, 'tis the cloſure of the Text, as in the rear-ward. We may ſay of the Text, as *Jacob* did, when the Angels of God (thoſe heavenly Auxiliaries) met him, *O, this is God's Hoſt*; and he called the name of the place *Mahanaim*. This *Cæleſte ſatellitium*, theſe Chariots of Fire, and Horſes of Fire, ſhall reſcue *Zerubbabel* from thoſe
C Chariots and Horſes of the Heathen, in the foregoing *Verſe*.

It ſpeaks to *Zerubbabel*, as the Angel to *Joſhua*, *As a Captain of the LORD of Hoſts, am I come to thee.* And, if he be with *Zerubbabel*, 'tis no matter how many of the Heathen be againſt him; as that brave Commander encouraged his Souldiers, when they ſaw his Enemies exceed them in number; *Why?* ſaid he, *for how many do you reckon me to be?* This Name, *through faith in this Name*, ſhall diſcomfit them all.

For cloſe of all:

Let us briefly Μεταχηματίζειν ταῦτα, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, transferr, and apply this Text to our ſelves, and to the Bleſſings we enjoy; and
D which this day doth juſtly reminde us of.

Firſt, And it is our Comfort that we may do ſo, that we ſtand in ſuch terms with God, that the Promiſes to his antient people may, with good warrant, be applyed, and transferred to us. 'Tis not for every Nation to do it; but for the People of his Covenant, the Heirs of his Promiſes, the *Iſrael* of God.

Secondly, And is it not a Bleſſing and Comfort, that we have a *Zerubbabel* to be Prince, and Captain of this People of God? *Zerubbabel*, I ſay, that is, as ſome interpret the name, *A ſtranger to Babel*; one that renounces all communion with that *Romiſh Babel*, and all her
E Abominations; or elſe, as others, *A Fanner of Babel:* and who, I truſt, is preſerved by God to fan out that Chaff from the good Wheat; that this Governour of our *Judah* ſhall be to them as a Torch of fire in an heap of Chaff, and their Superſtitions become as Stubble before him.

Thirdly, Is it not a Bleſſing, that the *Son of Shealtiel* is a Prince over us; one of the Royal Race, that we have no Stranger ſet over us;

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but a King over the Tribes of *Iſrael*? neither *Aſſur*, an Alien, as *Hoſea* threatens; nor *Jeroboam* one of *Solomon*'s ſervants: but the Son of Nobles, the iſſue of Royal Progenitours, deſigned by God to that Royal Dignity, from the birth, from the womb, from the conception. A

Fourthly, Is it not an high Favour vouchſafed us, that he is, and is owned by God for his Servant? and that not only *Poteſtate*, but *Pietate*; not only the High-Steward of God's Houſhold, and ſo his Servant by Office, but the ſervant of his God in Piety and Devotion. And what a Mercy this is, we may conſider, if we think of *David*'s Imprecation; *Set an ungodly man to rule over them*; or that of *Hoſea*, *Regem dedi ira mea*; or the Prophet *Eſay*'s Commination, *A Leopard ſhall watch over their Cities.* B

Brethren! Let's know, and acknowledg our happineſs. We have not *Pharaoh* to our King, *that knows not the Lord*, nor cares to know him; but one that religiouſly knows him, and is known of him.

'Tis no exceſſive queſtion, that I ſhall propound to you; Did *England* ever know a Prince more frequent, more conſtant, more attentive and devout in the Worſhip of God? We commend it in private perſons, and 'tis juſtly commendable; how much more in a King? To keep his conſtant times for Prayer, to bring his Children daily to the Worſhip of God; to teach them betimes to know the God of their Father. C

He is his Servant; and thoſe gracious claims, that God makes to his choiceſt ſervants, I doubt not, but in a moſt juſt proportion belong unto him.

I. *Servus, quem elegi*: He is his choſen ſervant.

II. *Servus, in quo complacui*: In whom he takes delight to do good unto him.

III. *Servus, quem ſuſtento*: His ſervant, whom his hand upholdeth.

IV. *Servus, & filius ancillæ*; He is *thy ſervant, and the ſon of thine hand-maid*; a true Member of his true Church. And D

V. Laſtly, *Servus, in quo glorificabor*, whom he will delight in, as in a bleſſed Inſtrument of his glory.

Fifthly, This ſervant of his, he hath made him as a Signet, and the ſtamp and ſignature of God is engraven upon him.

Clemens Alexandrinus forbids four ſorts of Characters to be ſet upon a Signet, as mis-boding Characters, and of ill conſtruction. None of them all are to be ſeen upon this Royal Signet; but the contrary Characters are evident in him.

I. Οὐκ εἰδώλων σχῆσιν. He forbids the figure, and ſtamp of an Idol. Our *Zerubbabel* hath the quite contrary character; that's the ſignature of his Piety. He neither knows, nor names, nor worſhips any other God, but the God of *Iſrael*. E

II. Οὐδὲ ξίφους, ἢ τόξου. He forbids the engraving of the Inſtruments of Cruelty. Our *Zerubbabel* hath no ſuch Character; he bears upon him the ſignature of Clemency. And Clemency, 'tis a Royal vertue.

Indeed

A Indeed Kings muſt ſing to God both of Mercy and Judgment; but the ſweet Song, is the Song of Mercy. *Do juſtice, and love mercy*; ſaith the Prophet *Micah*. He doth not only do it; but loves it, and delights in it.

III. Οὐ κύπελλα τῆς σωφροσύνης. That's the third Character he forbids; he would have no Emblem of Intemperance engraven upon it. And doth not this Signet, we are now beholding, bear the quite contrary impreſſion, the Signature of Sobriety? Is not this a confeſſed vertue eminently in him? He hath throughly learned King *Lemuel*'s leſſon, that his Mother taught him, *'Tis not for Kings to drink Wine, nor for*
B *Princes ſtrong drink*. He is free from that ſickneſs, that the Prophet *Hoſea* complains the Kings of *Iſrael* were ſubject to; *Morbo afficiuntur ex utre vini*; he eats and drinks for *ſtrength*, and not for *intemperance*.

IV. Οὐ τὰς ἑταίρας. *Clemens* forbids any laſcivious, or wanton Impreſſion, no ſtamp of *Uncleanneſs*. He bears upon him the Signature of Chaſtity. Whoſe Bed hath he defiled? Whoſe Chaſtity hath he aſſaulted? Whoſe Virgin hath he deflowred? *Regium eſt, ità vivere*, ſaith the *Orator*, *ut non modò homini nemini, ſed ut nè libidini ulli ſervias*: 'tis more true in him.

Biſhop *Latimer* preſented a Great Perſon in his time with an Hand-
C kercheif, wrought about with this Inſcription, *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judg*. The former part of the *verſe* may be the Poſie of this Royal Signet, *Marriage is honourable, and the Bed undefiled*.

Survey the World, and ſee how many ſuch Princes your thoughts are able to preſent unto you. May not their Names be writ *in pala annuli*, within a ſmall compaſs? Brethren, we may boaſt of God's Mercy, and it becomes us to do it. *Chriſtendom* cannot ſhew ſuch another Signet.

The LORD *ſet him as a* Signet *on his* Arm, *and as a* Seal *upon his*
D Heart; *He ſanctifie his Soul, and comfort his Heart, protect his Perſon, proſper his Government, knit the hearts of his People unto him in all love and loyalty, and his heart unto them in all tenderneſs and compaſſion: that ſo a Gracious King, and a Loyal People may long, and long enjoy each other to their mutual comfort. Grant this, good* LORD, *for the glory of thy* Name, *and for the merits of thy* Son, *and in much mercy to this* Nation; *and even for his ſake, who came to ſlay Enmity, and to eſtabliſh Peace*, Jeſus Chriſt, *our bleſſed Peace-maker, To whom with thee*, &c.

E

THREE

THREE
SERMONS
OF THE
Gunpowder-Treason,
PREACHED
Upon the Fifth of NOVEMBER.

ON

ON The GUNPOVVDER-TREASON,

The First Sermon.

DANIEL VI. 21, 22.

Then said Daniel *unto the King, O King, live for ever.*
My God hath sent His Angel, and hath shut the Lions Mouths, that they have not hurt me: for as much as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O King, have I done no hurt.

THIS Chapter upon a Summary View represents, and relates unto us, a malicious Conspiracy, and a miraculous Delivery. The prosperity and honour of holy *Daniel* was envied by the *Babylonian* Princes: their envy stirs them up to seek his ruin. Nothing, but his death can satisfie them. They consult, contrive, effect their purpose: The Prophet is ensnared, condemned, cast into the Mouth, and Jaws of death; and out of them doth the hand of God gloriously rescue him.

And then the Words I have read unto you; they are *Daniel*'s religious, and thankful acknowledgment of this his deliverance. And this his acknowledgment is directed to King *Darius*, by whom he was condemned, and cast into this danger of destruction. And it stands upon three Particulars;

First, Here is a reverend Compellation: *O King!*
Secondly, Here is a loyal Salutation: *Live for ever.*
Thirdly, Here is a thankful Declaration of his delivery: *My God hath sent his Angel*, &c.

First, Here is a reverend Compellation; *O King.* He acknow-

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ledges *Darius*, and honours him as his King, professes his loyalty, and subjection to him. And the fulness and weight of this homage, and duty of *Daniel*, will appear more remarkable, if we take a particular view of *Darius* chiefly in these four Considerations.

First, *Darius*, he was *Ethnicus*, an Heathen Prince, an Alien from the People of God, an utter Stranger to the Church and Common-wealth of *Israel*: and yet he is acknowledged, and honoured by this Prophet, as his King. 'Tis worth the noting; it affords this Observation; That, *Religion doth not exempt us from the Authority, and Power of Magistrates, and Rulers; though they be Infidels, and Heathens, and Strangers to Religion.* The Tyes, and Bonds of duty, and subjection to them, are sacred, and inviolable. Dominion and Sovereignty, are the Ordinances of God, not as he is the Author of Grace, and Redeemer of his Church; but as he is the Author of mankind, and Governour of the World. 'Tis a true Maxime in Divinity; *Dominium temporale non fundatur in Gratia*; Supernatural Grace is not that, which constitutes Kingdoms: and so the Calling, and Authority of Magistrates, is not a Mystery of the Gospel; but an Appointment of God, by his Universal Providence. The Duty of Children to Parents, of Servants to Masters, of Subjects to Princes, is not a Consequence of Christianity; but a Principle of Nature, and unalterable by Religion. A Christian Child cannot abandon his Duty to his Parents, though they be Heathen, or Infidels; a Christian Servant cannot shake off the Yoke of servitude, because his Master is an Unbeliever, 1 *Tim.* vi. 1. *Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour.* Christian Subjects cannot deny their Allegiance, and subjection to their lawful Sovereign, though Heathen, and Infidels. Thus Christ acknowledges subjection to *Pilate*, and that his Power over him was from Heaven; *John* xix. 11. Thus *Paul* appeals to *Cæsar*, as being obnoxious to his Power, and Tribunal, owns him as his King. This made Christ, and *Peter*, pay Tribute to *Cæsar*. The Papists, especially their Canonists, they wickedly teach, that Heathen Kings have no Power over Christians; but that the Gospel frees them from that subjection. *Daniel*, and *Jeremy*, and *Ezekiel*, Christ, and *Paul*, and *Peter*, and all Primitive Christians abhorred this Doctrine, and honoured Heathen Princes, as their rightful Sovereigns. That's the First; *Darius Ethnicus*.

Secondly, *Darius* comes under another Consideration: he was *Ecclesiæ inimicus*. Not only an Alien, but an Enemy: one, that kept the Church, and People of God in Bondage, and Captivity, used them not only as subjects, but as slaves, enthralled them to his Tyranny; yet still acknowledged, and honoured by the Prophet, as their Rightful Sovereign. Subjection and Fidelity is due from Christians to Kings, and Princes, though they prove Oppressours of the Church. The Prophet *Jeremy* exhorts the *Jews* to take up the Yoke of the King of *Babylon*, and to submit to him, to study the Peace of his Government, and to pray for him. The People of God lived

A lived in subjection to the *Roman* Empire, though it were Tyrannous over them. Saint *Paul* exhorts Christians to Obedience to Kings, and Princes, even when they were Persecutors. The Primitive Saints obeyed many Emperours, that spilt the Blood of Christians. They submitted to *Julian* that hateful Apostate. Saint *Peter* requires subjection, not only to the good, and gentle; but to froward Governours. Papists teach, that Kings, if they prove Oppressours, may by the Pope be deposed, uncrowned, murthered. No: the Army of Martyrs obeyed even to death; They rose not in Rebellion. *Apud nos tutius est occidi, quàm occidere*, saith *Tertullian*. Christians had rather be murthered,
B then murther: and he tells the Heathen, that the Christians in his Time were able to wage War against Emperours, that destroyed, and havocked them; but that Conscience, and Christianity enforced Obedience. That's the Second; *Darius Ecclesiæ Inimicus.*

Thirdly, *Darius* was *Impulsor ad Idololatriam.* He makes here a wicked Law, forbidding Religion, and inforcing to Idolatry, assumes all Religious Worship to himself; yet the Prophet acknowledges, and honours him, as his King, and Sovereign. Observe, *Religion requires subjection even to those Kings, that deface the Worship of God, and would compel to Idolatry.* Active, and actual Obedience to ungodly
C Laws we may not, we must nor yield, and perform. Thus to submit to man, were to rebel against God: but yet Protestation of subjection must continue; though our particular active obedience be denyed, and restrained. *Legibus bonis emendantur mali, & legibus malis probantur boni*; saith Saint *Augustine*. Good Laws of Princes must amend us, when we are bad; and their evil Laws must try, and prove our Constancy in Religion, in those that are good. *Saul*'s servants were good Subjects to him, though at his Command they would not murther the Priests of God. Then, though we dare not perform our active obedience, in doing what they command; yet we must per-
D form our passive obedience, in submitting to their punishments. *Daniel* dares not obey the King, forbidding him to pray; but yet he obeys commanding him to die. Papists teach, that Heretical Kings forfeit their Crowns, and Lives, if they command against God. No: we must here, with *Daniel*, honour their Persons, and Calling; when Conscience forbids us to fulfil their Commandment. That's a *Third*; *Darius Impulsor ad Idololatriam.*

Fourthly, *Darius* was now *Autor Periculi.* He was the Authour, and Commander of *Daniel*'s destruction; his Law ensnared him, his Power condemned him, his Seal shut him up in the Den of Lions:
E Yet for all this, this holy Prophet honours him, as his King. Observe, *No wrong, or injury, can exempt, or discharge our persons from our lawful Sovereign.* The *Hebrews*, havock'd by *Pharaoh*, rebelled not. *David*, pursued by King *Saul*, opposed not, conspired not against him. *Jeremy*, persecuted by *Zedekias*, revolts not. I; this is thanks-worthy with God, if we be wronged, not to mutiny, and repine, not to revile, or oppose; but to suffer as Christians in meekness, and patience:

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Private wrongs may have redresses; but Magistrates, armed with Authority, if they prove heavy, and injurious; they must be proofs of our Patience, not provocations of our Revenge. A

Tantum de Compellatione.

Secondly, Follows his loyal, and pious Salutation; *Live for ever.* He prays for him, wishes him both length, and prosperity of life here, and eternity of life, and felicity hereafter.

I. He upbraids not the King with Tyranny, and Impiety; charges him not with the Cruelty of his usage.

II. Threatens him not Vengeance, and Judgments from God; much less, as a Prophet, doth he denounce sentence of Deprivation against him; as the Pope did against King *Henry*, for the death of *Becket*, a rebellious Priest: but, forgetting his wrongs, forgiving his persecutions, he sends up a devout Prayer for his life, and welfare. Here is the Patience, and Piety of the Saints; being Cursed, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; 1 *Cor.* iv. 11. *Bless them that persecute you. Bless, I say, and curse not:* Rom. xii. 14. *This is not to be overcome of evil; but to overcome evil with good*; verse 21. This approves us Christians. *In much patience, in affliction, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, and imprisonment*, 1 Cor iv. 11 Especially the Gospel, that turns just revenge into Prayers, and Blessings. The Law was more direful, and severe; *Elias* he calls for Fire from heaven upon his Persecutors. Christians must be of another spirit. The Spirit of the Gospel is a Spirit of Meekness, and Goodness, and Gentleness. Oh now! cursing, and blood, and slaughter, they are the fruits of the Malignant Church; marks of the worshippers of the Red Dragon. The Followers of the Lamb must be like the Lamb, must be meek, and harmless. *Zechary*, the son of *Jehojada*, out of the Spirit of the Law, being stoned, calls for vengeance; *The Lord look upon it, and require it*; 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. But *Steven*, out of the Spirit of the Gospel, being stoned, prays for his murderers; *Lord, lay it not to their charge*; Act. vii. 60. So the Apostles, being threatned (*Act.* iv. 21.) do not imprecate; but beg assistance, and Gods hand to be stretched out, not to plague their enemies; but to heal, and to work helpful, and beneficial miracles. How unlike are Papists! Not a Canon broken, not a Priest punished, not a Priviledge impeacht, not an Insolency repressed; but presently come forth Thunderings of Curses, and Slaughters, and Treasons. *Aut hoc non est Evangelium; aut isti non sunt Evangelici.* B C D

Then *Orat pro Rege.* He will not pray to the King; but he ceases not to pray for the King. *Colimus Imperatorem sic, quomodo & nobis licet, & ipsi expedit; ut hominem à Deo secundum, & quicquid est Deo consecutum, solo Deo minorem: hoc & ipse volet; sic enim omnibus major est, dum solo vero Deo minor est.* Tertull. *ad* Scapulam Here is the tryal of *Daniel*'s Allegiance. Oh! he worships a prohibited God, adores not the King: He is a factious, seditious man, not worthy to live! Thus they account of him. He is against the Kings honour. E

A nour. Vain men! Which are the better Subjects, they that pray for the King, or that they pray to him? In such impious commands Christians do obey the King, when they disobey him; they seek his Welfare, when they will not flatter him. *Saul*'s Subjects loved him more, that would not slay the Priests of God; then *Doeg*, that did it. The *Jews*, that made *Herod* a God, in their flattering Acclamation, they were Traitours to him, and hastened his death: they were so far from honouring him, that they ruined, and destroyed him. *Honorandus est Rex non pro Deo, sed propter Deum.* He rightly honours the King, that accounts him the Great Minister of God; and so prays for
B him: not he, that will make a God, and pray to him. *Verè magnus est; quia solo Deo minor.* Therefore he is great; because next under God. Thus the Primitive Christians, refusing to burn Incense to Emperours, or to swear by their *Genius*, did pray for their Armies, and Empire, for their life, and tranquillity.

Thirdly, Follows his thankful Declaration of his marvellous deliverance. It stands upon five particulars;

First, He sets out the Authour of his deliverance; *My God.*

Secondly, The Instrument of it; *Hath sent his Angel.*

Thirdly, The Manner of it; *Hath shut the Lions Mouths.*

C *Fourthly*, The Measure of this deliverance; *That they have not hurt me.*

Fifthly, The Motive, that God graciously looked on; not a meritorious Motive, exacting it of his justice; but an impetratory Motive, obtaining it of his goodness: and that is *Daniel*'s Piety, in two expressions.

I. Was the Innocency of his Person; *For as much as before him innocency was found in me.*

II. Is the Innocency of his Cause; *And before thee, O King, have I done no hurt.*

D Thus *Daniel* purposely sets out all the course of his rescue, as it were in opposition to the malice of his Enemies.

1. His Enemies have engaged the King against him; but his piety, and innocency hath engaged God for him.

2. Their Flattery hath engrossed the King to their purposes; he is theirs wholly, *Daniel* is excluded. See, his Faith hath appropriated the King of Heaven to him; *My God hath rescued me.*

3. They have combined, the Princes, and Nobles, and Captains, against him: He hath the Peers of Heaven, the Armies of Angels, those mighty Spirits, they come to rescue him.

E 4. They have sealed him up into the Den, that the Lions may devour him; these Helps have sealed up the mouths of the Lions, that they cannot hurt him.

First, Come we to the Authour; *My God*: and in it are two things;

I. Is his Helper; that's God.

II. Is his Hold, that he lays upon this Helper, for his rescue, and delivery: that's in this word, *Meus, My God.* I. God

EX BIBL. UNIV. EDINBURGEN.

Sermon I.

I. God, He is the Helper. Indeed all deliverances, eſpecially of his Church, and Children, are the Works of God. The help, that is done upon earth, he doth it himſelf; Pſal. lxxiv. *He is the God of Salvation, unto him belong the iſſues from death*, Pſal. lxviii. 20. Eſpecially here God is the Helper, and the only Helper, and that in three Reſpects, in three Exigencies, in which he will be ſeen;

1. *Contra tantum inimicum:* Againſt ſo great an Enemy.
2. *Pro tantillo:* For ſo forſaken and helpleſs a man.
3. *A tanto periculo:* He alone can help out of ſuch danger.

1. God muſt be the Helper *contra tantum inimicum.* Againſt the power of a King there's no reſcue, but by God. *Who can ſay to the King, What doſt thou?* ſaith *Solomon.* No man can diſarm the ſtrong man, and ſpoil him; but only he, that is ſtronger. Againſt private or tumultuary violence, other helps may come in; but when Magiſtrates, armed with Authority, oppreſs, that's *Caſus reſervatus*; then 'tis time, *Lord, for thee, to lay to thine hand:* none, but the King of Kings can controll them. Saint *Ambroſe*, and ſo Saint *Baſil*, and *Chryſoſtom*, when the People would have reſcued them from the Emperour's hard uſage of them, they all three forbid it. 'Tis He only, that is terrible to the Kings of the earth.

2. *Pro tantillo*; that's a ſecond Exigent. 'Tis God alone, that can reſcue him now. *Daniel* is thruſt out of the Protection of the King; no Mediation, or Interceſſion is made for him; all urge, and preſs the Law againſt him; now he is a poor, deſtitute, forſaken man. That is another *Caſus reſervatus.* The delivery of ſuch an one is Gods peculiar Work. 'Twas ſometimes *David*'s Caſe, Pſal. cxlii. 4. *I looked upon my right hand, and beheld; but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my Soul:* then he adds, Verſe 5. *I cried unto thee, O LORD, I ſaid, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living, --- deliver me from my perſecutors; for they are ſtronger then I. Thou art the helper of the helpleſs.* 'Twas Saint *Paul*'s Caſe before *Nero*, no man ſtood with him, all men forſook him; *but the Lord was with me, I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion*, 2 Tim. iv. 17.

3. *A tanto periculo*; that's a third Exigent. None, but God, can reſcue, now that *Daniel* is in the very Jaws of death. The King himſelf, would he never ſo fain, cannot now deliver him, now he is in the very Confines of deſtruction. The Prophet's condition, for any humane help, is become deſperate. This is a third *Caſus reſervatus.* 'Tis Gods high Prerogative to ſave in extremity, to take out of the Jaws of death, to pluck us out of the pit's brink, nay, from the pit's bottom. Thus *Paul* magnifies his deliverance: *We were preſſed out of meaſure, above ſtrength; ſo, that we deſpaired of life: and then God delivered me from ſo great a death*, 2 Cor. i. 8, 10. *David* out of the depths: *Jonas* out of the Whale's belly: the three Children out of the fiery Furnace: Theſe are all *Caſus reſervati*, all proper to that God, which is the God of deliverance, that works ſalvation in the midſt of the

A the earth. In the Mountain will the Lord be ſeen; ſo here, in the Dungeon was the Lord ſeen.

II. See his hold he lays on this help; *My God.* 'Tis not ſufficient to ſee help at hand, if we lay not hold upon it. *Lay hold upon my ſtrength*, ſaith God in *Eſai.* So doth here *Daniel*'s Faith claſp cloſe upon God. At all times our Faith muſt relie upon him. *Who is this, that cometh leaning upon her Beloved?* 'Tis the Churches deſcription, *Cant.* viii. 5. But in Dangers, Fears, Temptations, then Faith embraces, claſps about him. Here is not only *contactus*; but *complexus fidei.* As *Jacob*, being in fear of *Eſau*, would not let go his hold. O, 'tis good
B then to draw neer to God; no neerneſs is cloſe enough, no approach too immediate.

For further expreſſion, we may reſolve this word of intereſt, and relation, *Meus*, into theſe particulars;

1. He is *Meus*, My God, *ex appropriatione cultûs*; *My God*, by ſpecial ſervice, and Religion; the God of my faith, and piety, and devotion. Nature diſcovers a God, and Infidelity will allow him us; as *Darius* doth here to *Daniel*, *Thy God*, in the former Verſe; juſtles him off to *Daniel*. Others are ſtrangers to him; only Religion makes him our God; it ſets him up in our ſouls, ties the heart, and conſcience to him.
C This gives us good hopes of deliverance, when we make God our own. Stick to him, and he will ſtand to us. Alaſs! moſt deal with God in their dangers, as the *Iſraelites* did in their diſtreſſes, ſend to hire the King of *Egypt*, or *Syria*, to help at a pinch: No, we may expect him our helper, if we truly make him our own God.

2. *Meus*, *My God*, by publique profeſſion, and open adoration. He glories, and boaſts himſelf in his God. Now, when he was forbidden to name any God, but an Idol; now, when God's name, and worſhip, was a reproach unto him, nay death, and deſtruction: yet then *Daniel* owns him, profeſſes him. *I will ſpeak of thy Teſtimonies, even be-*
D *fore Kings, and not be aſhamed*, ſaith *David*. *Daniel* ſhrinks not from him, and therefore now God owns him again. *They that confeſs me, I will confeſs them.* He *is not aſhamed to be called their God*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. If we ſtand to God, when he needs us, and maintain his honour, he will ſtand to us, maintain our cauſe. Alaſs! we fail God, and ſo 'tis juſt God ſhould fail us.

3. *Meus*, *My God*, by ſpecial truſt, and affiance. Indeed this word, *Meus*, *Mine*, 'tis Faith's Poſſeſſive. Common Faith looks upon God in a general notion; but a true ſaving Faith brings him home to us by neareſt application. *He loved me, and gave himſelf for me*, ſaith
E St. *Paul*. Faith, 'tis never kindly, and proper, till it comes to this, to make God our own, to work our ſelves into a full poſſeſſion of him. *My well-Beloved is mine, and I am his. Dicat anima ſecura dicat*, Deus meus es Tu *ei, qui dicit animæ*, Salus Tua ſum Ego; *Aug.* Let us ſay to him, *Thou art my God*, and he will ſay to us, *I am thy ſalvation.*

4. *My God*, by preſent evidence, and experience in this glorious deliverance. Now he hath avouched himſelf to be his God, by his gracious

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gracious rescue. As he saith, *he will make himself known to be Jehovah*, when he frees them from *Egypt*. See, now he is called *the God of* Daniel, *ver.* 26. Men must *tremble, and fear before the God of* Daniel. So *chap.* iii. 29. he is proclaimed by *Nebuchadnezzar*, *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego, when he delivered them out of the fiery Fornace. As we make known our selves to be his people by special service; so extraordinary Mercies do endear God more to us, strengthen our relations. *I am thy God that brought thee out of bondage*. By such deliverances God gains new right in us, possesses us upon more Titles; when he saves, and delivers us. Thus he will be owned by his people; *You shall say, The Lord lives, not that brought us out of* Egypt *only: but that brought us out of the* North-*Country, from the Captivity of* Babylon. A B

5. *Meus*, by resolution, and engagements of holy thankfulness. This deliverance is a dear obligation to *Daniel*; now he renews his Covenants; as, after their return out of captivity, they entred into a new Covenant, to be the Lords people. Thus *David* expresseth his, and his people's thankfulness: *This God shall be our God for ever and ever, he shall be our guide unto death.* And yet again, Psal. cxvi. 16. *O LORD, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thine hand-maid, thou hast loosed my Bands.* In particular freedoms from any danger, or sickness, hath God given thee thy life, saved it from the pit? Oh! return it unto him, devote it thankfully unto his service. The Heathen were wont to make their Saviours their Gods. What said the People to *David? Thou hast saved us from the* Philistines, *reign thou over us.* Oh! for a people, rescued with such glorious salvations, for us to sit loose with God, grow strange to him, deal falsly in his Covenant, joyn other Gods with him; 'twill be odious ingratitude. C

Vidimus autorem; Now follows,

Secondly, The Instrument of this deliverance, *sent his Angel*. And this form of speech is observable for two reasons. D

1. Why not *Angelus meus*; but *Deus meus?* He saith not, *God sent my Angel*, but *My God sent his Angel*. The assignment of particular Angels to particular men, that every one should have a Guardian Angel, may pass for a decent and probable opinion. Whether it be so, or no, we are sure they are his Angels, and employed by him for the good of his Children. If our Faith can say, *Deus meus, My God*, 'twill be no Infidelity not to say, *Angelus meus, My Angel*. The Disciples indeed said, *'Tis* Peter's *Angel*, Act. xii. 15. But *Peter* himself, what saith he? *The Lord hath sent his Angel, and hath delivered me*, Verse 11. *Adstitit mihi Angelus Domini, cujus sum, &, cui servio*, Act. xxvii. 23. E

II. 'Tis not *Angelus venit*; but *Deus misit Angelum* He saith not, *An Angel came*; but *God sent him*. That's another comfort. No doubt, those holy Angels and Spirits, are most forward; and ready to assist, and help us: but there is our comfort, that God sends them; that they help us not by their own motion, but by God's mission, and com-

A commiſſion. *Thou haſt given commandment to ſave me*; Pſal. lxxi. 3. 'Tis *miſt. He gives his Angels charge*, Pſal. xci. 'Tis Gods commandment, and their employment to ſave us. The evil Angels cannot annoy us, but by God's permiſſion; and the good Angels they prove helpful to us by his command, and commiſſion. *They are all miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them, who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation*; Heb. i. 14. Had the Papiſts the ſetting out this Story, we ſhould have had a goodly long Legend penned by them, and the Name of the Angel ſhould have been ſpecified; and they would have told us, to which of the nine Orders of Angels he had belonged, and we
B ſhould have had an Office publiſhed, and a ſet, and ſolemn Form of Worſhip to this Angel enjoyned. But *Daniel*, that was much acquainted, and converſant with Angels, over-looks all theſe, fixes his eye of devotion, and thankfulneſs upon the God that ſent, and employed this Angel. Angels abhor, that God ſhould be wronged in aſcribing to them the glory of our Deliverance. *If thou wilt offer a Sacrifice*, ſaith the Angel to *Manoah*, that would fain have done him honour, *Offer it to the Lord.* They deſire not to receive worſhip from us; but delight in worſhipping of God, to joyn together with us. 'Tis the definition, that *Athanaſius* gives of an Angel; he is
C ζῶον λογικὸν, ἀθάνατον, ὑμνολογικόν· a *rational, immortal creature, continually ſinging praiſes to God.*

Now this Miniſtery of an Angel, in the delivering of *Daniel*, adds unto this deliverance three Excellencies.

I. It makes it a comfortable Deliverance. *Daniel* is here a forlorn, forſaken man, caſt out of the Society of men into the Company of Beaſts, compaſſed with horrour, excluded from humane Succour: Well; but here is his comfort, he is viſited by an Angel. Thus it befel Chriſt in his Temptations, *Mark* i. 13. He was with the wild Beaſts in the Wilderneſs; and the Angels miniſtred unto him. The
D World may deprive us of its own comforts, ſuch as they are; but they cannot exclude us from the comforts of Angels. Here is the ſweet ſupply of God's perſecuted Servants: they are forſaken of men; but viſited by Angels.

II. It makes it a glorious Deliverance. God had infinite ways to reſcue him; but ſuch a Saint ſhall not only have ſafety, but honour. Such glorious ſalvations he vouchſafes to his choice, and eminent Saints, and Servants. *Elias* ſhall be fed, not only by a Raven, but by an Angel too. He hath *Angelum pocillatorem*; an Angel is his Sewer, and Cup-bearer; as when *Ahaſuerus* would dignifie *Mor-*
E *decai*, the moſt houourable of all his Nobles, and Princes muſt be his Querry, and Attendant, and proclaim before him, *Thus ſhall it be done to the man, whom the King will honour.* King *Ahab*'s Children were placed with the great men of the City to attend them. God's Children, and Servants are Guarded and compaſſed about with Legions of Angels.

III. An Angel is ſent for his reſcue, it makes an irreſiſtible De-

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liverance; there is no disappointing of this Salvation. See how *Daniel*'s Enemies make all sure; the den of Lions is closed, and sealed up, as *Pilate* sealed Christ's Sepulchre, set a watch of Souldiers that no man should open it. Alas! Can these exclude Angels, forbid their approach, or hinder it? Thus *Elisha* was begirt with an host of Enemies; but the Mountains were full of Horses, and Chariots of fire to protect, and safe-guard him. *Peter* is by *Herod* shut up in Prison, bound in chains, a watch of many Souldiers placed before the Prison, an Iron Gate made fast upon him. What then, One Angel of God breaks through all resistances, rescues him gloriously. If men can clip Angels wings, pinion those heavenly Souldiers, hinder or resist their forceable entrance, then, and not till then, they may have their will upon the Church of God. The Apostles were put into the common Prison by the High Priest, and those, that were with them, which was the Sect of the *Sadduces*. Well, these *Sadduces* shall know there are Angels; *The Angel of the Lord by night opened the Prison-doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go stand, and speak in the Temple to the People the words of this life.* Acts v. 18. Even in this sense that Speech of *Paul* is true, *I am a Prisoner in Bonds; but the Word of the Lord is not bound.* There is no hindering of his Command by the Ministry of an Angel.

Now follows.

Thirdly, The manner of this Deliverance, how it was wrought; *He shut the mouths of the Lions.* God no doubt, had many other ways to prevent, and disappoint this mischief. He might have altered the King's, and the Prince's hearts, as he did the heart of *Ahasuerus*. He made him give over his purpose of destroying, made him study the preservation of the *Jews*. So he changed *Esau*'s bloody purpose against *Jacob*: he came marching in fury against him; but God allaid his rage, made him kind, and loving to him. He spake by night to *Laban*, charged him not to wrong his servant *Jacob*. He could have sent a message, as he did to *Pilate*, *Have nothing to do with this Just man*; but see here, he suffers the malice of these wicked blood-thirsty men to come to the utmost, they ensnare him, surprize him, accuse him, condemn him, enclose him, seal him up, and then God dashes all. 'Tis a more glorious victory over the malice of men, give them rope, and scope enough, let them do their utmost; when all is set, even *in articulo mortis, in faucibus perditionis*, when these children, these brats of Satan are come to the birth, there shall be no strength to bring forth.

So then, this deliverance was wrought by shutting the mouths of the Lions. He delivers him not, by bringing him out of the den of Lions; but by preserving him in it. 'Tis more glorious, and wonderful, to preserve us in the midst of danger, then to snatch us out of it; as he did the three Worthies, *Chap.* 3. in the Furnace. The fire was about them flaming. He quenched not the fire, or suddenly catched them out of it; but preserved them in it, so that they walked, and talked, and sung in the midst of the Flames, and were not hurt

A hurt by it. God ſometimes ſaves us by prevention, keeps us from falling into danger; ſometimes by ſubvention, by making us eſcape out of danger; but here by conſervation, in the midſt of danger. *Daniel* is among the Lions, and yet not devoured; to teach us, not to deſpair of help, though the ſnares of death be about us. He can make the Lions, *prædæ ſuæ cuſtodes*, become Guardians of *Daniel*. He can make poverty, impriſonment, all perſecutions tolerable, and comfortable. *Though I walk through the Valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear none evil*, ſaith *David*. As God did with theſe Lions, ſo God can deal with men that are as Lions, crüel, and mercileſs; He can
B reſtrain them; ſo he can deal with that *Leo rugiens*, the Devil that roaring Lion. God can ſtop their mouths: they may ſhew their teeth; but they ſhall not devour us. The Buſh burnt with Fire; but it was not conſumed; the Church may be on fire by perſecutions; but ſhall not be deſtroyed.

But how did he ſhut the mouths of theſe Lions?

I. Either *Vi comprimendo*; by a ſecret power, weakning, or reſtraining them, taking off their force, and power of hurting him. Thus the Viper could not hurt *Paul*; the Fire could not have power over the Bodies of the Three Worthies. The Apoſtle joyns them both
C together, *Heb.* xi. 33. *They ſtopt the mouths of Lions, quenched* (not the fire, but) *the violence of fire. At thy rebuke, O God, the Chariots, and Horſemen are fallen aſleep.* No ſtrength of any creature can avail, when God abates the force of it. *Eſai.* liv. 16. *I have created the Smith, that blows the coals, --- and the Waſter to deſtroy; but no weapon, that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper.* The ſmalleſt creatures, Flies, Lice, Locuſts, if he commands them, can deſtroy a whole Kingdom: Lions, if he rebuke them, are not able to annoy us.

II. Or *Ferociam mitigando*; by taming, and allaying their fierceneſs, and cruelty, and in changing their phantaſie into a more milde
D apprehenſion. This is the ſecurity of God's Saints: they have a Covenant with the Beaſts of the Field, and the Stones in the ſtreets are at peace with them. Thus *Eſaiah* promiſes, *That the Lion ſhall lie down with the Lamb, and a young Childe ſhall lead them; no noyſom beaſt ſhall deſtroy in all my holy Mountains.* They that are in peace with God, all the Creatures ſhall be at peace with them. The fire ſhall not kindle upon thee; *the Water ſhall not overwhelm thee.*

III. Or *Saturitatem indendo*: repreſſing, and ſlaking their hunger, dulling their appetite. God can rebate the edg of all hurtful things. Thus the Lord promiſed, that, at their reſort to worſhip at *Hieruſa-*
E *lem*, when they ſhould leave their Frontire-Towns unmanned, *I will make, that none of the People about thee ſhall deſire thy Land all that time*, not make any inrode, or invaſion upon them.

IV. Or *Danielem formidabilem iis reddendo*; by making the Prophet appear awful, and dreadful to them. *Adam* in innocency had a Sovereignty over all the Beaſts; the dread of him was upon all Creatures. This Image of God, now ſhining in *Daniel*, aws theſe Lyons,

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that they dare not hurt him. *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion, and the Adder*; Pſal. xci. 13. This is God's promiſe in *Ezek.* xiv. *When I ſend noyſom beaſts into the Land, Noah, Daniel*, and *Job* ſhall not be hurt by them. Our rebellion againſt God makes the Creatures rebel againſt us: Our peace with him, our ſubjection to him, ſubdues them to us. A

The next thing obſervable, is,

Fourthly, Gradus liberationis, *That they have not hurt me*: not only, not devoured me; but not done the leaſt harm to me: This make it a compleat deliverance. The Lyon ſlew the Prophet, that went to *Bethel*; but did not devour him: here neither jaw, nor paw, neither tooth, nor talland, hath laid hold upon *Daniel*. Otherwhile God delivers his Children, but not without ſome marks, and skars of dammage upon them; ſuch was their deliverance out of Captivity. He compares his people to a *Brand catched out of the fire*; Amos iv. 11. They were not *peruſti*, but yet they were *ambuſti*: not conſumed, but yet ſcorched with that Fire. So *Amos* vii. 4. The Lord *contended by fire*, and it *conſumed a part*. *As the Shepherd takes out of the mouth of the Lyon two legs, or a picce of an ear*, Amos iii. 12. So ſometimes but a remnant ſhall eſcape. So 2 *Chron.* xii. 8. God would not give over his people to be deſtroyed by *Shiſhak* King of *Egypt*: *Nevertheleſs they ſhall be his ſervants* (they ſhall not wholly eſcape) *that they may know my ſervice, and the ſervice of other Kingdoms*. Theſe were to correct his ſervants, and to puniſh ſin in them. But here, and oftimes elſe, he vouchſafes them intire, compleat deliverances, without the leaſt hurt; like the three Children, they were not conſumed, not ſcorch'd, not ſo much as the ſmell of Fire upon them. Thus he ſaved them at the Red-Sea, not one *Iſraelite* drowned, not one *Egyptian* ſaved: theſe were to juſtifie his children, and their Religion againſt their perſecutors. B C

Fifthly, the Motive, which God graciouſly reſpected, when he delivered his ſervant. And it is a double innocency; D

1. *Innocentia perſonæ*. He was an holy, and innocent man: that's a prevailing motive with God. *He favours the integrity of his ſervants*. It makes him delight in their proſperity. But, was not *Daniel* a ſinner? Yes, verily, *Chap* ix. 20. he confeſſeth his own ſins. What ſaith St. *Iohn*? *If we ſay, We have no ſin, there is no truth in us*. *John* the *Daniel* of the New-Teſtament, and *Daniel*, the *John* of the Old-Teſtament, both greatly beloved, they both confeſs themſelves ſinners. So then, there is a double innocency.

1. Legal, and abſolute. Put them to that tryal, they will fall ſhort of innocency. E

2. Evangelical. The innocency, that Chriſt will accept, the innocency of a good conſcience, a freedom, not from infirmities, but from preſumptuous ſins. *David* avows ſuch an innocency in himſelf, *Pſal.* 18.

(1.) Comparatively. Verſ. 21. *I have not departed from my God as the wicked do.*

(2.) In

A (2.) In aim, and intention, Verſ. 22. *I had an eye unto all his Laws.*

(3.) In all poſſible endeavour, Verſ. 23. *I eſchewed mine own wickedneſs.*

Here is,

II. *Innocentia cauſæ.* He pleads the innocency of his cauſe. He had done no hurt to deſerve this puniſhment at the King's hands; but he had diſobeyed the King's Commandment, and yet he was innocent. He is an offender, that obeys not lawful Commands; otherwiſe obedience to God abſolves us from obedience to unlawful Commands.

B But then with three Cautions.

1. It muſt be *in manifeſtè impiis.* Such was *Saul's* command to *kill the Prieſts:* but in *dubiis, Joab* diſſwades *à numerando populo*; but yet obeys.

2. This refuſal muſt be *abſque contemptu*; ſtill reſerving our loyalty, and ſubjection.

3. It muſt be *cum paſſiva obedientia*: not reſiſting; but ſubmitting to the penalties of Law.

So then, we may obſerve in this motive four Combinations.

Firſt, Duplex innocentia, coram Deo, coram Rege. Piety towards

C God, Loyalty to his King. They may, nay, they muſt be joyned together: *Fear God, honour the King*; ſo St. *Peter* joyns them. We muſt neither be *Herodians*; ſo we hold with the King, and be true to him, 'tis no matter for God; nor yet *Phariſees*, pretend much piety to God, and be falſe-hearted to our King. We muſt be both good Subjects, and good Chriſtinns.

Second Combination. *Duplex Tribunal: coram Deo*; there he is found innocent; *coram Rege*, there he is caſt, and condemned, as nocent. Man's Tribunal may condemn us for tranſgreſſours, and Delinquents; well, there is an higher Tribunal; *There are higher then they,*

D ſaith *Solomon.* God's Tribunal will acquit, and abſolve us.

Third Combination. *Duplex ſollicitudo*; he is careful to clear himſelf both to God, and to Man alſo: but firſt, and chiefly to God; after that to man. That was the ſum of Saint *Paul's* Apology. Acts xxiii. 1. *I have lived in in good conſcience before God until this day*; but yet he neglects not the Opinion of men. Indeed he leſs regards it. *'Tis but a ſmall thing, that I ſhould be judged of you*, 1 Cor. iv. 3. 'Tis *pro Minimo*, but not *pro nullo*; he would not be accounted offenſive, or ſcandalous before men.

Fourth Combination. *Duplex purgatio*; before God, that's a Purga-

E tion of evidence; *Found innocent before God:* here is too *Purgatio proteſtationis coram homine*; he could not evict it, but yet he profeſſes it before men. *My record is in heaven*, there my innocency is apparent; my proteſtations are before men, to them I avow mine integrity; as Saint *Paul* ſpeaks, *Hominibus perſuademus, Deo autem manifeſti ſumus*; 2 Cor. v. 11. *We perſwade men, but we are made manifeſt to God.*

We

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We have done with the Text. A

It remains now we apply it to the Time; and see how this Story of *Daniel*, both for the Conspiracy, and for the Deliverance, will sort with the Story of this day, which we now commemorate; and which deserves to be transmitted to all Posterity. And we will make a double comparison of them;

First, In their Similitude, wherein they agree.

Secondly, In their Dissimilitude, wherein this of ours exceeds, and goes beyond this of *Daniel*'s.

First, See their Similitude;

First, They are alike in the Authours of the Mischief. The plotters of this Conspiracy, they were the Princes of *Babylon*: And was not this of ours hatcht in the same Neast, framed in the same Forge? Their *Babylonish* Monarch, and Princes; the Pope, and his Complices contrived this Conspiracy. We may truly take up that Speech in *Ezek.* xxiv. 2. *Son of man, write the name of the day, even of this same day, the King of* Babylon *set himself against* Hierusalem *this same day.* B

Secondly, As alike Authors, so alike Cause, and Motives; That was Envy (as that's the usual plotter of Treason.) They envied *Daniel*'s Honour, and Prosperity, that he should be the chief Governour, and carry it from them. And that stirred up our Traytours, and Conspiratours. Oh! that the King should be peaceably possessed of the Crown, succeed in this Kingdom: not one of their Party, that galled, and vexed them. They laboured to put him down, whom God would advance. C

Thirdly, *Similis prætextus*. They pretend the same Exception: that's matter of Religion. That's a fair Vizzard for foul Treason. *Daniel* must worship, as they worship; *Darius* must be their God. And that was the pretence of our Traytours: the *Romish* Religion, the Catholike Cause, that must be advanced; nay indeed, the worshipping of their *Darius*, the Pope's Supremacy; no Religion, but by his allowance, 'tis that they stand for. D

Fourthly, They have the like Plea; a Decree sealed, that cannot be altered. *Daniel* must die, the laws of the *Medes* and *Persians* were not to be changed. So our Traytours, they must put in execution Pope *Clement*'s Brief, to exclude a Protestant from being King. That's an Oracle, the Pope is Infallible: Just as their Fore-fathers, the High Priests, and Pharises; *We have a law, and by our law he ought to die*, Joh xix. 7.

Fifthly, They had *Speluncam Leonum*; a dungeon of perdition, a swift, total, remedilesse perdition for *Daniel*. And our Traytours had their *Speluncam*, a Mine, a Vault, a Sellar, full fraught with Instruments of sudden unavoidable destruction. E

Sithly, *Similis liberatio*; Our deliverance was alike;

I. From God; no wisdom of man fore-seeing it. *O res gestas in terra; sed cœlitus; per homines, sed divinitus!* Aug.

II. By an Angel. An extraordinary discovery, by an over-ruling Providence.

A vidence. That Pen, by which that Letter was written, which firſt gave notice of this horrid Treaſon, being thereto over-ruled by God's great Providence, was made of a Quil of an Angel's wing, as *Luther* ſaith of the writing of the Scripture; *The* Devil *hates that* Fowl, *from which that* quil *was taken, which made that* pen, *by which the* Scripture *was written.*

III. It was *ab Ore*, We were in the very Jaws of death, the Pit digged, the Train of Powder laid, the Match lighted.

IV. *Clauſit Ora.* No hurt was done, all croſſed, and diſappointed: the ſnare was broken, and we were delivered.

B *Seventhly, Innocentia comperta coram Deo.* Our Religion by God juſtified, and miraculouſly honoured: the Seal of this glorious deliverance was ſet unto it.

Hitherto they agree; But now you ſhall ſee,

Secondly; The Treaſon of this day far exceeds that of the *Babyloniſh* Conſpiracy.

Firſt, That Plot was *contra unum*, againſt one man. Were *Daniel* removed, and deſtroyed, they would be ſatisfied: Here a whole Church, and Nation, the King, the Seed-Royal, the Nobles, Senatours, the whole Kingdom, ſhould have been deſtroyed. *Haman*'s Conſpi-
C racy; All the *Jews*.

Secondly, Their Plot was *contra alienigenam*; againſt *Daniel*, one of the *Jewiſh* Captivity; our Traitours Plot againſt their own Brethren, and Countrey; they were all *Engliſh*-men. (I ſhame our Nation, in ſaying ſo; but ſo they were) *Fight not againſt your Brethren, the Children of* Iſrael. *Moſes* had rather kill an *Egyptian*; then ſtrive with an *Hebrew. Ye are Brethren, why wrong ye one another?* If *Jacob* curſed *Simeon* and *Levi*'s cruelty againſt the *Sichemites*: how odious is their cruelty againſt their Brother *Joſeph?*

Thirdly, Theirs was an attempt of King, and Princes, againſt a
D Subject; this of ours was of Subjects againſt King, and State. For Princes to havock their Subjects lives, 'tis cruel; *Summa parſimonia viliſſimi ſanguinis*: but for Subjects to murther Kings, and Princes, 'tis abominable. *Locuſtæ ſunt, & non habent Regem*; Theſe *Locuſts they have no King*, ſaith *Solomon*.

Fourthly, Daniel's Conſpiratours were Nobles, Captains, Souldiers, Secular men; the ſufferer, a Prophet, of a religious Profeſſion: here our Traitours, and Plotters, the chief of them, Prieſts, Jeſuits, Holy Fathers, men of the Church. 'Tis cruel for Secular men to murther the Prieſts of God: but for Prieſts to be Incendiaries, ſtirrers of ſedition,
E to imbrue their hands in blood; 'tis horrid iniquity.

Fifthly, The proceeding of theſe men againſt *Daniel* was much more merciful.

I. He had warning given him by a publick Law.

II. They uſed a legal Trial by conviction, and condemnation. *Daniel* had time to addreſs himſelf to God, to fit himſelf for death. This treaſon of ours was ſecret, unknown, ſudden: no time, or thought

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thought of death afforded; but, in a moment, all blown up, and destroyed.

Sixthly, After the deliverance of *Daniel*, *Darius* repents of what he had done, condemns the Conspiratours, and punishes them, glorifies God, and that Religion, which was thus by God approved, advances *Daniel*: But for our Traytours, the Pope doth not so much as check them, as dislike them. So far he was from *Jacob*'s bitter detestation of *Simeon*, and *Levi*'s cruelties; as that he did not, with old *Eli*, blame, and reprove them: Nay, he Canonizes them for Martyrs, that suffered for this Treason; Books must be written to defend, and justifie them. The *Israelites* when God answered by *Fire from Heaven*, forsook *Baal*, cryed, *The* LORD *is God*. Our God hath answered us not by kindling; but by quenching of Fire: Yet there is no relenting, or the least repenting. Well; let us thankfully acknowledge this Mercy; lest this Judgment of War finish that Work, which those Traytours intended, and so *Æshines* his Speech prove true of us: *Never Nation was more Miraculously preserved by God; never any more monstrously destroyed by themselves.*

ON

ON
The GUNPOVVDER-TREASON,

The Second Sermon.

DANIEL iii. 28.

Then Nebuchadnezzar *ſpake, and ſaid, Bleſſed be the God of* Shadrach, Meſhach, *and* Abednego, *who hath ſent his Angel, and delivered his ſervants, that truſted in him, and have changed the King's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not ſerve, nor worſhip any God, except their own God.*

THE Chapter is a Relation of a ſharp, and bloody Perſecution upon the Church of God, for their refuſal of Idolatry. It is an Inſtance of that, which St. *Peter* calls the *Fiery Tryal*. *Babylon*, the Chief Seat of Heatheniſh Superſtition, ſingled out by the Spirit of God, for the Type, and repreſentation, both of the Idolatry, and Cruelty, that ſhall afflict the Church in theſe laſt days, is here the Stage, on which a bloody Tragedy was Acted. And, as St. *Auguſtine* ſaith of *Doeg*, that ſlew the Prophett of God; *Unus homo eſt* Doeg; *ſed genus hominum eſt* Doeg: *Doeg* is not one man only; but the Type, and Figure of many: (Many *Doegs* have been, and many will ever be, that carry bloody mindes againſt the Prieſthood;) ſo *Babylon* is not that one City only, that, in *Daniel*'s Time, perſecuted the Church of God. There is literal *Babylon*, and myſtical *Babylon*. *Auguſtine* notes it uponhoſe words of *David*, *O Daughter of* Babylon; *Babylon*, ſaith he, *is both a Mother, and a Daughter*; *Mater propter prolationem*, *Filia propter ſucceſſionem*. A primitive *Babylon*, and a ſucceſſive *Babylon*; the Eaſtern *Babylon*, and the Weſtern *Babylon*.

Serm. II.

This latter the Daughter of the former, in a full likeneſs and imitation; A

First, In Power, and Supremacy.

Secondly, In Superſtition, and Idolatry.

Thirdly. In Perſecution, and Cruelty. This Chapter teſtifies for the one; this day is a great evidence, and conviction for the other: both thirſting after the blood of the Saints, and of the Servants of God.

Let us reflect a little upon the preſent Story of this Chapter, and we ſhall obſerve a full agreement, and a ſimilitude, in the Idolatries, and Cruelties of that Primitive *Romiſh Babylon*, and this preſent *Babyloniſh Rome*, that now Uſurps, and Tyrannizes over the Church B of God.

Firſt, The Idolatry of both of them, 'tis ſumptuous, and coſtly. The Chapter tells us of an high Statue, and Idol of Gold, erected by the King of *Babylon*, Verſ. 1. Superſtition, and Idolatry will be no Niggard, it will ſpare no coſt; but be exſpenceful, and ſumptuous, to maintain an invented and Superſtitious Worſhip.

I. *Nebuchadnezzar* muſt have no petty diminutive God; *ſix cubits in breadth, ſixty cubits in height.* Goodly, goodly! Whats this to the infinite immenſity of our God; that fills Heaven, and Earth? C

II. It muſt be of Metal too, laſting, and durable. A mock imitation of the true God's eternity. *Eſai* tells us, that the pooreſt Idolater, that muſt be content with a woodden God, yet *chooſes a Tree, that will not rot*, Eſai xl. 20.

III. It muſt be rich, and coſtly, all of beaten gold. *Their Idols*, ſaith *David*, *are Silver, and Gold.* How readily did the *Iſraelites* break off their Ear-rings of gold, to make their Golden Calf? It may ſhame us Chriſtians, that are ſo baſely penurious in maintaining, and beautifying the worſhip of our God; nay, worſe then ſo, ſacrilegiouſly robbing, and ſpoiling our God, and his Church: imitating *Verres* D his Reformation of *Sicily*; he took away all the rich Images of their Gods, only he left them *ligneam Fortunæ ſtatuam*, a woodden Image, of which he could make no money.

Secondly, The erecting of this Idol is done with the greateſt authority. *Nebuchadnezzar*, the great Monarch of the World, is chiefeſt in the work, and engaged in it: Theſe have been made the maintainers, and ſupporters of *Romiſh* Superſtition. The Kings of the Earth have been made to drink of the Cup of *Rome*'s abominations. The Great Ones of the World have *committed this Spiritual Fornication with that Whore of* Babylon. E

Thirdly, 'Tis done with great Pomp, and Solemnity. Here is a glorious Dedication of this new-upſtart God, with all Splendour, and Magnificence. Outward Gliſter, and Pomp, is the Beauty of the Malignant Church. See how St. *John* deſcribes her; *She is crowned with Gold, cloathed with Purple, adorned with precious Stones.* Whereas the Church of Chriſt, ſhe is cloathed with the Sun, ſupported by the Moon,

A Moon, crowned with Stars; all of them ſpiritual, and heavenly Ornaments.

Fourthly, 'Tis done with great Content, and Univerſality. All the Governours, and Princes of the Provinces are gathered together, V. 2. all engaged in this Idolatrous Worſhip. This ſin of Idolatry, it hath been an over-ſpreading Evil. *Tertullian* calls it *ſeculi reatus*, the Great crime, and guilt, of the whole World. Every man lifts up his voyce, and cries, *Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians! This command of *Nebuchadnezzar* is yielded to by the multitude; All the people fall down preſently, readily accept of the new-invented God. 'Tis God's
B complaint, *The Statues of* Omri *are kept.* *All* Iſrael *worſhip the Golden Calf.* They *willingly went after the commandments of King* Jeroboam, as *Hoſea* ſpeaks.

Fifthly, 'Tis impoſed with all Strictneſs, and Severity; nay, 'tis preſſed upon the people with Cruelty, and Tyranny. The Fiery Furnace, that muſt maintain the worſhip of the Golden Image. Blood, and Fire, and Perſecution, they are the great promoters of Idolatry. Cruelty, 'tis the Brand of the Malignant Church. *Babylon* is drunk with the Blood of the Saints: whereas true Chriſtianity is a Religion of meekneſs and mercy. *Lex nova non ſe vindicat, ultore gladio.* It
C writes not her Laws in Blood; breaks not in upon Kings, and Kingdoms, with a violent entrance; calls not for fire from heaven upon the gain-ſaying *Samaritans*. The Fiery Furnace, and the Vault of Gunpowder, Murders, and Maſſacres of Princes, and People, *hæc ſunt ſceleri propriora quàm religioni.* Such are the Enforcements of Idolatry; far from the temper of true Chriſtianity.

Sixthly, Notwithſtanding all this violence in preſſing, and this great generality of ſubmitting to this Idolatrous Injunction; yet, here a few, a ſmall number, an handful, three men, that deny their Conformity, and refuſe to engage themſelves in this publique Impiety. In the great-
D eſt Univerſality, and prevailing of Impiety; yet God hath ſome, that withſtand Superſtition, and give Teſtimony to his Truth. St. *Paul* ſpeaks it to another purpoſe, but 'tis true in this caſe alſo, *God leaves not himſelf without witneſs.* He hath his *Noah*, a righteous man, in the midſt of an evil Generation; his *Lot* in *Sodom*; his *Elias* amongſt *Baal*'s Prieſts; a few Names in *Sardis*; ſome even, where Satan's Throne is, that hold faſt his Name, and not deny his Faith. Two Witneſſes againſt the whole World: a few captived *Jews*, that deny their worſhip to this new-erected Deity.

Seventhly, Upon theſe, the penalty of the Law is inflicted in all
E extremity.

I. Though but Three.

II. They, men of great Place, and Employment, ſet by the King over the affairs of the Province of *Babylon*, uſeful to the State.

III. Peaceable; no Raiſers of Sedition, and Tumult.

IV. No Blaſphemers of this new-made God; but only bare refuſers, and that for Conſcience ſake: they dare not do it, and yet con-

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demned to a cruel tormenting death, and their punishment encreased, the Furnace made seven times hotter. Here is the rage of Idolatry; here is the cruelty of King, or rather Pope, *Nebuchadnnezzar.*

You have seen the practice, and proceedings of this bloody Religion. These refusers are seized upon, and cast into the Furnace: Well, what's the success? that's extraordinary, and miraculous. God gives way to these men of blood, lets them do their utmost; He saves not these three holy men by rescue, or prevention, he keeps them not from the Fire; but preserves them in it: They are, like *Moses* his Bush, burning, but not consumed. *The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire.* That is here performed, which *Esai* foretold, and promised, *Chap.* xliii. 2. *When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* And this Deliverance, 'tis not secret, but conspicuous, in the eye, and observation of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who seeing, and wondering at this strange deliverance, gave this great acknowledgment of it, which the Text mentions.

So then this Passage of Scripture in this, and the two following Verses, reports to us a solemn Testimony given by *Nebuchadnezzar* to this miraculous deliverance of these three holy men from a cruel destruction. And this his Testimony will appear in three Evidences, and Manifestations of it.

First, It appears in a thankful Benediction of Almighty God for this gracious deliverance: that's set down *Vers.* 28. which I have read unto you; *Blessed be the God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego.

Secondly, It appears in a strict Injunction, and Provision for his glory; prohibiting all men, upon severe penalty, to blaspheme, or say any thing amiss, against the God of these holy men, *Vers.* 29.

Thirdly, It appears in an Honourable Promotion, and Advancement of these three Worthies to Places of Dignity, and Authority in the Province of *Babylon*, Verse 30.

My Text, that contains the first Evidence, and Testimony of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Acknowledgment, his Benediction, and Blessing of God for this wonderful deliverance. And here we have,

First, The Action of Blessing, together with the Agent, *Nebuchadnezzar.*

Secondly, The Object, or Person, to whom he ascribes this Blessedness, that's *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego.

Thirdly, The Benefit, for which he blesses him: that's the *sending of his Angel to work this deliverance.* And,

Fourthly, The Motives acknowledged, for which *God* delivered them. They are four;

I. *Quia servi.* They were *his servants.*

II. *Quia confidentes.* Because they *trusted in Him.*

III. *Quia constantes.* They were resolute and constant in their holy Profession. *They changed the King's Word.*

IV. *Quia Martyres.* They chose to suffer death for their God, and

A and their Religion; they would rather die, then dishonour Him. *They yielded their Bodies; that they might not serve, nor worship any God, except their own God.* They loved not their lives to death, that they might be true to Him.

Come we to the

First, Nebuchadnezzar's Act of benediction, and blessing, the thankful acknowledgment he makes of this great deliverance. 'Tis much to hear praises, and benedictions of God out of such a mans mouth. Ye heard formerly, as on this day, of a great deliverance, and a devout acknowledgment of it out of this Book, for *Daniel*'s rescue from
B the Lion's Den: But that was made by the Prophet himself, that was delivered; this here hath somewhat beyond that; it is the testimony, and benediction of an Heathenish Infidel, of a cruel Persecutour. What? is *Nebuchadnezzar* also among the Prophets? Another *Saul*, first pursuing of *David*, that he might destroy him, then suddenly cast into a divine rapture, falling down before *Samuel*, and *David*, and Prophecying. Saint *Augustine* makes it a Type, and Prefiguration of the usage of the Christian Church by Kings, and Emperours. First, they are, like *Nebuchadnezzar*, erecting Idolatry, destroying Christianity; then, like *Nebuchadnezzar*, they acknowledged, and
C establish'd that Faith, which formerly they destroyed, and made good Laws for it.

Well, this Blessing of *Nebuchadnezzar* hath *aliquid Humanum* in it, or some sparks of Humanity in it. To be glad, and well-pleased for the saving of mens lives, for the sparing of blood-shed, such thanksgivings are comely. We may learn this from *David*, Psal. cvii. There he meditates on the miseries, and dangers that befal upon mankinde, the dangers of Travellers, the miseries of Captives, the diseases of Sick-men, the perils of Sea-men, and blesses God for all their deliverances:
D *Oh! that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.*

Sure, they were of another Spirit, that were the Masters of the mischief, that was intended this day. They hung down their Heads, as men disappointed of what they intended; the ruin of this Nation. These *Nebuchadnezzars* of *Rome* gave no thanks to God for this day's deliverance; but Books were set out to justifie the Traytours; nay, Bulls were sent forth to Canonize them for Saints. If a King, or Kingdom be delivered from destruction; all is silent, and sullen at *Rome*. But, if a King be murthered, as *Henry* the Third of *France*, by an assassinating Monk, then 'tis Holy-Day at *Rome*. The Pope
E call's a Consistory, makes an Oration, admires God's providence, that a poor Member should dispossess, and murder a mighty Prince. Even *Heathenish Babylon* exceeds in humanity the *Romish Babylon*. When King *Hezekiah* was recovered out of a great danger, the King of *Babylon* sent to congratulate his recovery, and to rejoyce with him. Indeed *Rome* is not only spiritual *Babylon*, but spiritual *Edom* too: imitating those wicked *Edomites*, in rejoycing at the ruins, and desolations

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solations of Kingdoms. The Prophet *Obadiah* lays it to the charge of *Edom*; *Thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy Brother, in the day that he became a stranger: neither shouldest thou have rejoyced over the children of* Judah, *in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress*, Vers. 12. Let such rejoycers consider what *Solomon* saith: *He that is glad at Calamities, shall not be unpunished*, Prov. xvii. 5.

To take a more particular notice of this benediction, and blessing of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s, let us consider it in a double notion.

I. Let us see, *quid laudabile*; what was good, and commendable in it.

II. *Quid defectivum & culpabile*; wherein it was faulty, and defective.

1. *Benedicit, non Prosequitur*; that is one thing commendable. He goes not on obstinately, nor renews his persecution; a Miracle stops him, and forthwith he desisteth. He is not, as some other persecuting Tyrants have been, the more enraged at this strange deliverance. That was *Pharoah*'s Impiety. God's Miracles, and Wonders, did the more harden him, still he persisted in his oppressions. So *Ahab*, and *Jezabel*, though God by *Elias* wrought a strange miracle, sending *fire from heaven*, yet see how they are enraged. The very next day a message is dispatched to tell the Prophet, he must lose his head for it. So *Ahab*'s son *Ahaziah*, when fire from heaven had consumed his Captain, and his fifty, that came to apprehend *Eliah*, yet stubbornly he persists, dispatches a second, and yet a third Troop of Souldiers, to seize on the Prophet. We see that wicked spirit in the obstinate *Jews*; our Saviour wrought a wonderful Miracle in raising *Lazarus* out of his Grave: why, this Miracle did more eurage them. First, they consult to put *Lazarus* to death, and then they resolve to destroy Christ himself. And this hath been the practice our *Romish* Traytours. How many Treasons had they plotted; aud yet how many marvellous defeats have they met with? Many a time have they conspired against our Church; Yea, many a time, have they sought our ruin, but they have not prevailed against us. And yet they could not see God's hand; but hatched this Treason, against King, and Kingdom. St. *Hierome* writes of an innocent Woman, *Septies icta*; seven times struck at with a sword to be beheaded. Our Church hath had more Blows given it; and yet Malice, and Envy will not desist. That's the First, *Benedicit, non prosequitur.*

2. *Benedicit, non calumniatur.* He blesses God for this deliverance, he quarrels not at the Miracle, as wrought by some false Deity, or by means of celusion. We know *Pharaoh*, and his servants, *Jannes* and *Jambres*, withstood the Miracles, that *Moses* did work; they counted them but Juggling Tricks, and Enchantments, and would not yield to them, as divine Operations. Thus did the *Pharisees* with our Saviour's Miracles; *He casts out Devils by* Beelzebub *the*

A *the Prince of Devils.* They said he did what he did by the Black Art. 'Tis the usual practice of Infidels, to question, and vilifie the wonderful Works of God, as they did that great Miracle of leading the people through the Red-Sea. Oh! they said, *Moses* took the advantage of a Low-Tide, carryed them over the Washes, when it was Low-water. 'Tis Satan's practice to defame the works of God, and to mak ill constructions of them. But this King here is more ingenuous; he speaks rightly, and reverently of them.

3. *Benedicit, non obvelat.* He takes notice of the Miracle, doth not labour to smother, and conceal it; gives no commandment, that no
B man should speak of it, but is forward to give an honourable testimony of it. Malice loves, and labours to darken, and obscure, such Evidences of God's power, when they make against them. Even this day's deliverance, though so gloriously evident; yet Books have been written by the *Romish* Faction, that report it a meer Fable, that there was no such thing, as the Powder-Treason. Of such a spirit were the obstinate *Jews*. How did they set themselves to smother the Glory of Christ's Resurrection? *Say, He was stolen away while we slept, His* Disciples *removed his body out of the Grave:* 'twas no such matter as a Resurrection. How did they bestir themselves to stifle this Mi-
C racle, even when it was confirmed by another Miracle! Act. iv. 16. *What shall we do to these men?* (say they) *for that indeed a notable Miracle hath been done by them, is manifest to all, and we cannot deny it; but, that it spread no farther amongst the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this Name.* But this Miracle here works more kindly upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, he owns, and acknowledges it.

We have seen what is commendable in this Benediction; but yet it hath its defects; something is wanting here in *Nebuchadnezzar*, more would have been expected from him.

D 1. *Benedicit; sed non dolet.* He is well pleased with their deliverance; but yet here is no sign of sorrow, or remorse, for his cruelty towards them; no Confession of his fault, in so bloody a Persecution. These, and such as these, Miraculous Evidences of God's power, should beget other effects in us, besides wonder, and admiration: they should make us reflect upon our selves, and our sins. As it was with St. *Peter*, when Christ wrought a Miracle in his Ship, at the great draught of Fishes, what said *Peter? Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man*, Luk. v. 8. 'Twas not so with the Malefactours of this day; no sense, or sign of sorrow for that bloody contrivance.
E The worst they said of it, was, *It was the Act of some unfortunate* Gentlemen. But, had it taken Effect, we should have had *Paulus Quintus*, like *Sextus Quintus*, call another Consistory, set up a Picture of it, as they did of the Massacre in *France*, in the Pope's Palace. That's one defect.

2. *Benedicit; sed non convertitur.* He blesses God, and applauds the Miracle; and there he stops: but is not drawn by it to a religi-

ous

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ous converſion, to believe in that God, which had wrought ſuch great things for the deliverance of his Servants. A man may be much affected with the glory of God's Work's, and Praiſe, and magnifie them: but, if it have no other work upon us, it is loſt, and ſpilt. The High-Prieſt's Officers, they wondred at Chriſt's Wiſdom, the Peope were oft-times much taken with his Miracles; but yet fell ſhort of true Converſion. Chriſt charges this defect upon the *Jews*. He upbraided the Cities, wherein moſt of his mighty works were done, becauſe they repented not; They wrought admiration, but not converſion. *Mat.* xi. The deliverance of the *Jews* from *Haman*'s Conſpiracy, it wrought better with the People, that ſaw, and obſerved it. 'Tis ſaid, many of the People of the Land *became Jews*, Eſth. viii. embraced that Religion, which God ſo protected. Such a good effect had the Miracle upon the Jalour, *Act.* xvi. When he found the priſon doors opened by an Earth-quake, and the Apoſtles Chains fallen from them, preſently he crys, *Sirs, What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Teach me to be a Chriſtian. The like operation a Miracle had upon *Naaman* the *Syrian*, 2 King. v. *Behold*, ſaith he, *now I know there is no God in all the Earth, but in* Iſrael; *I will therefore neither offer Burnt-offerings, nor Sacrifices to any other Gods, but unto the Lord.* And the Deliverance of this day ſhould have had the like Effect in our bloody Traytors, but it had not; no renouncing of that bloody Faction, no embracing of that holy Religion, to which God gave Teſtimony by ſo wonderful a Preſervation.

3. *Benedicit in cauſa aliorum, non in ſua.* He bleſſes God in the behalf of theſe men, but not in his own behalf: He bleſſes not God, that had miraculouſly prevented his wicked Deſign in murthering, and deſtroying theſe holy men. 'Tis a great mercy of God to keep us from ſuffering evil, but it is a greater mercy of God to keep us from doing evil, that our wicked intendments do not take place, but that God interpoſes and diſappoints us. Saint *Paul* makes his acknowledgment of both theſe mercies; both in delivering him from ſuffering evil, and in preſerving him from doing evil, 2 *Tim.* iv. 17. *The* Lord *ſtood by me, and ſtrengthened me, and I was delivered from the mouth of the Lion:* there he was reſcued from ſuffering; but then he adds, *The Lord ſhall deliver me from every evil work, and preſerve me to His heavenly Kingdom.* That's the great Mercy in preſerving us from doing evil. See this pious practice in *David*, 1 Sam. xxv. 32. being reproached by *Nabal*, in a ſudden Paſſion he marches furiouſly to deſtroy *Nabal*, and all that belonged to him; but, being prevented by *Abigail*'s ſeaſonable entreaty, what ſaith he? *Bleſſed be the* LORD *God of* Iſrael, *which ſent thee this day to meet me, and bleſſed be thine advice, and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood, and from avenging my ſelf with mine own hand.* 'Twill one day be a comfort, when thy Heart can ſay; *Lord, I have not wiſhed for the evil day, I have not put mine hand to any violent action; God hath kept me from the ways of the Deſtroyer.*

We

A We have done with the Benediction. Come we now,

Secondly, To the Person, to whom 'tis ascribed; The Authour of this deliverance: that's *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego.

See here, he ascribes this great Work to the right Authour, to the true God; doth not impute it to any false Deity. 'Tis He, that sends deliverance to his People. 'Tis He, that works salvation in the midst of the earth. *To him belong the issues from death*, Psal. lxviii. 20.

But yet, why doth he make this acknowledgment of God under this Expression, *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego? This Speech of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s,

B I. Implies three Errours in him.

II. Implies three Truths in it self.

1. Conceive it as the Speech of an Ignorant man, of one, that had no knowledg of the true God; but upon this present evidence, and manifestation of him. God had other more antient Titles, by which he was known. He was the *God of Heaven*, the *Lord of the whole Earth*, the *God of* Abraham, *and of* Isaac, *and of* Jacob; *that was his Name for ever, this is his memorial unto all generations*; Exod. iii. 15. But this Pagan King knows him not by these glorious descriptions. Before he speaks in *Pharaoh*'s Language, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey him? I know*
C *not the Lord; who is that God, that shall deliver you out of my hands?* Ver. 15. Now, a sudden flash of Lightning shines into him; but otherwise habitually ignorant. He knew him not by the work of Creation, by his daily Providence, by his sacred Scriptures, by his gracious Covenant; but only by this sudden miracle, owns him only by this Title, *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego.

2. This Speech, proceeding from this King, 'tis the Language of Idolatry. Paganism, and Idolatry, uses to distinguish of Gods, to multiply them, and to make, and imagine many differences of Godheads. Idolatry uses to divide that indivisible Unity of the One only
D God. *Nebuchadnezzar* hath his Gods, old, and new; and he supposes these men have another God by themselves, and he likes well of it. 'Tis the Character of Paganism, they have *Deos Topicos, & Regionarios*, Provincial Gods, and National Gods, Gods of the Hills, and Gods of the Valleys, as the *Syrians* distinguish. Like the Mariners, and Passengers in the Ship with *Jonah*, *Every one called to his several God*; if one cannot help, the other may. This, Saint *Paul* tells us, is the Case of Idolaters. *There are Gods many, and Lords many; but to us there is but one God, and one Lord*, Jesus Christ. 'Tis that, which *Zecharie* Propheses of, *Chap.* xiv. 9. *There shall be but one Lord, and*
E *His name shall be One.*

3 This Speech, 'tis the Language of one persisting still in his Infidelity. He calls this great wonder-working God, *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego: he doth not call him his God, for all this great Evidence of his divine Majesty. He doth not, with *Naaman*, abandon, and cast off his former false Gods; saith not, *There is no God in the earth, but the God of* Israel; resolves not, *This*

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God ſhall be my God: but ſpeaks of him at a diſtance, like his Succeſſor, *Darius*, *Cannot thy God, whom thou ſerveſt, deliver thee?* Then this Miracle had wrought kindly, had it not only cauſed him to wonder, and ſtand at a gaze; but had drawn him nearer to God, and to cloſe with him. What King *Ahaz* ſaid wickedly of the *Aſſyrians* falſe Gods, *Nebuchadnezzar* ſhould have ſaid piouſly of the true God. What ſaid *Ahaz*? 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. *Becauſe the Gods of the Kings of* Syria *help them; therefore will I ſacrifice to them; that they may help me.* Becauſe the great God thus delivers his Servants, this God ſhall be my God, and I will ſerve him only. Theſe are the Errours in this Speech of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s. A B

But look upon this Speech in it ſelf, and ſo it carries with it an intimation of three Truths.

1. 'Tis *Vinculum Religionis.* It ſhews us the near relation, which Religion gives us to our God, it appropriates God unto his ſervants, makes him to be their God in a ſpecial manner. Piety, it doth ὁμολογεῖν, it makes God to be our God, and us to be His People. There paſſes a mutual Vouchee 'twixt God and us, by the tye of Religion; as *Moſes* tells the *Iſraelites*, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. *Thou haſt avouched the LORD to be thy God, and to walk in his wayes, and the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar People, and to make thee high above all Nations.* This honour have all the Saints. *They* are a *People near unto him:* as *David* calls them; *Pſal.* cxlviii. 14. *He is not aſhamed to be called their God,* Heb. xi. 16. There is an interchangeable aſſuming of each others Name: His Name is called upon them, they are called His People; they are called *The People of the God of* Abraham, *Pſal.* xlvii. 9. and their Name is attributed to him; he is called their God. As *Auguſtine* often ſpeaks, *Caput & Corpus unus eſt* Chriſtus; alluding to that of the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. xii. 12. *As the body is many Members, ſo alſo is* Chriſt. There the Church is called by Chriſt's Name. [Elſewhere he aſſumes the Name of his People. *Pſal.* xxiv. 6 *This is the generation of them, that ſeek thy face, O* Jacob; that is, O God of *Jacob.* A great honour, for the King to ſuffer a Subject to quarter any part of the King's Arms, or to call himſelf by the Name of his Subject. *The God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *the God of* Jacob. *Cujus omnes gentes ſunt, quaſi trium hominum Deus eſſet,* ſaith *Auguſtine*; He calls himſelf by the Name of theſe three men, though all men living are under his Dominion. C D

2. 'Tis *honor confeſſionis.* This name, and appellation, that he is called the God of theſe three men, 'tis the honour, and dignity of this their noble confeſſion, in ſticking to his ſervice, though they die for it. They had honoured his name, and now God honours their names, puts them amongſt his Titles of Honour. They, that honour him, ſhall be honoured by him. Whereas flinchers, and Renegadoes ſhall be forgotten, their name caſt out as vile: Such Worthies as theſe, their Names ſhall not be *blotted out of the Book of life.* He E will

A will *confess their names before his Father, and his holy Angels*; Rev. iii. 5. And again, *He, that overcomes, upon him will I write the name of my God, I will write upon him my new Name*, Verse 12. These are the Stars of the first Magnitude in the Firmament of his Church; like *David*'s Worthies, that stuck to him in all his troubles, and maintained his cause with the hazard of their lives; their Names are upon record, transmitted to posterity.

3. 'Tis *jus liberationis*. This Title, *The God of* Shadrach, Meshach, *and* Abednego, implies a new claim, that God lays to these three men, for working their deliverance, they are become *his servants*, he is be-
B come their God, by right of rescue, and deliverance. *Servi, à servando*; they are called servants, for being saved, and preserved by him. New deliverances multiply, and strengthen God's Title to us; as *David* confesses, *Psal.* cxvi. 16. *LORD, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thine hand-maid, thou hast loosed my bonds.* He acknowledges himself both a born servant, and a servant by purchase, and rescue, and enlargement. *Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, We are thy servants, thou hast redeemed us from the hand of the enemy.* God purposely inserts these great deliverances into his Royal Title, Jer. xxiii. 7, 8. *They shall say, the LORD lives, who led the house of* Israel
C *out of the* North *Countrey, and brought them out of Captivity.* And so again, promising his People rest from their enemies, He adds, *This shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign, that shall not be forgot*, Esai lv. 14.

Come we

Thirdly, To the next particular, the working of this deliverance by sending of an *Angel*.

I. What is the Mercy? that's *deliverance*.

II. What is the Minister, and Instrument? how is it wrought? by the dispatch of an *Angel*.

D I. The great work here is deliverance, and riddance of these men from a mischief, and destruction. Indeed deliverance is the work, that God delights in, by which he will make himself known to be the true God. *Samuel* makes it the proof of a false God, *That they cannot profit, or deliver*; 1 Sam. xii. 21. And the Prophet upbraids *Amaziah* for choosing those Gods, that could not deliver *their own people out of his hands*, 2 Chron. xxv. 15. If he be a God, let him shew himself, by saving of *his servants*. But our God is known by this gracious work, by sending, by commanding, by working deliverances for them that wait on him.

E And this deliverance, 'tis the more admirable;

1. Because from a present destruction. 'Tis not by way of prevention; He keeps them not from the danger, but rescues them out of it. He suffers this bloody Tyrants to seize upon them, condemn them, cast them into the Fiery Furnace, and then miraculously he saves them. That's here performed, which *Esai* foretold and promised, *Chap.* xliii. 2. *When thou walkest through the Fire, thou*

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ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the Flame kindle upon thee. Such was St. *Peter*'s deliverance, *Acts* 12. *Herod* had reſolved his deſtruction, he was caſt into priſon, the iron Gate lock'd upon him; the next morning appointed for his Execution: and then God diſappoints all; diſpatches deliverance upon the wings of an Angel, and forthwith delivers him. And ſuch was our deliverance, Powder provided, the match kindled, but a ſtep betwixt us and death. A

2. Becauſe it was a deliverance from a dreadful deſtruction, from a moſt cruel tormenting death, from the burning Furnace. As is the danger, ſuch is the deliverance. A deliverance from any miſhap, is a bleſſing. To deliver our feet from falling, to keep us from the daily miſchief, that might befall us, 'tis a fair favour; but deliverance from death, from a cruel, tormenting death, (ſuch was this in the Text, ſuch was this of this day) it makes up a wonderful, and glorious deliverance. We may take up *David*'s acknowledgment, *Pſal.* xxxv. 10. *All my bones ſhall ſay, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverеſt the poor from him that is too ſtrong for him?* that ſend ſuch deliverances as theſe, from ſuch extremities. B

3. Becauſe it was a total deliverance: Not the leaſt hurt done, not an hair of their heads periſhed. Not like the deliverance *Zechary* ſpeaks of, a *brand ſnatch'd out of the fire, ſcorch'd*, though not conſum'd; not like the deliverance *Amos* ſpeaks of, *Chap* iii. the reſcue of a *worried ſheep out of the mouth of a Lyon, two legs*, or a *piece of an ear*, half ſaved, half deſtroyed: no, this was a compleat intire deliverance. *The Fire had no power over their bodies, nor was an hair of their heads ſinged, neither were their coats changed, not the ſmell of the fire had paſſed on them*; Verſe 7. Such was this day's deliverance; all devoted, but yet none given over to deſtruction. The Stone out of the Wall, ſtill ſtanding, can teſtifie; and the Beam out of the Timber, ſtill remaining, ſhall anſwer, and witneſs for this day's deliverance. C D

II. For the Inſtrument, it was by the ſending, and d ſpatch of an Angel. I will not inſiſt upon it. You heard of this deliverance by an Angel, in this place, and on this occaſion, out of *Daniel*'s confeſſion, *My God hath ſent his Angel*; which makes, as that then, ſo this now, to be a comfortable, an honourable, an irreſiſtible deliverance. Only in this preſent deliverance by an Angel, take notice;

1. Of God's Majeſty.
2. Of the Churches Security.
3. Of their Enemie's Madneſs, and Folly; to aſſault, and perſecute them. E

1. Admire, and glorifie our God's great Majeſty; who hath his glorious Angels always attending, ſpeedily diſpatching his will, and commands. *Nebuchadnezzar* hath his Princes, and Governours, and Captains, and Counſellours, all in attendance on him, μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, with great Pomp, and Magnificence. Alas what is this to *the God of* Shadrach, Meſhach, *and* Abednego? He hath his Legions of Angels,

Thouſand

A *Thouſand thouſands miniſtring unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſands alwayes ſtanding before him.* If the Queen of *Sheba* wondred at the attendance of *Solomon*'s ſervants, how ſhould we adore that God, that hath his innumerable Angels that excel in ſtrength, to do his commandments?

2. See here the Churches Security. The Holy Angels are ready to reſcue, and deliver them. 'Tis not with the Church of God, as 'tis with other men. The greateſt Princes may come to that exigent, as to ſay with the King of *Iſrael*, when he was called upon for help, *If the Lord do not help thee, hom can I help thee?* No, the *chariots of God are* B *twenty thouſands, even thouſands of Angels.* 'Tis not for want of help, that his people are not delivered from the power of their enemies; but for other expediences. As *Auſtin* asks the queſtion, comparing theſe mens deliverances with the death of the ſeven Saints in the *Macchabes*; *Nonne eſt ipſe Deus* Macchabæorum, *qui trium Puerorum?* Was he not the God of the *Macchabees*, as well well as of *Shadrach, Meſhach*, and *Abednego? Illi apertè liberati ſunt; hi occultè coronati:* he would ſave theſe from fire, but crown the *Macchabees* for their Martyrdom in fire. He was magnified in theſe men, by their life, and in the others he was magnified by death, by which they glo- C rified God.

3. Let the Churches perſecutours ſee againſt whom they fight, againſt a People, that can be reſcued by force of Angels. It ſhould ſtrike terrour into the moſt potent Perſecutours. They fight not againſt *fleſh* and *blood* only, but againſt *ſpiritual rulers*, and *dominions*, and *thrones*, and *principalities*, and *powers in heavenly places. Nebuchadnezzar* hath his burning furnace, God hath his flames of fire to oppoſe them. *Pſal.* x. 44. *He makes his Angels Spirits, his Miniſters a flaming fire.* He, that will make War with God, and his Church, let him ſit down, and conſider, whether he can meet him with ten thouſand weak men, D that comes againſt him with twenty thouſand mighty Angels? Alaſs! what were the moſt mighty men of *Nebuchadnezzar*, that caſt theſe men bound into the fiery Furnace, if compared to the Angel of God? How ſoon were they conſumed? *Ver.* 22. As *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks ſweetly; Thoſe three Worthies were, like Gold in the Furnace, not conſumed, but more reſplendent; the men, that caſt them in, like Straw at the mouth of the Furnace, ſoon burnt, and deſtroyed. *Palea uritur, Aurum purgatur*; Auguſt.

Fourthly, The fourth thing remarkable in this Acknowledment of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s is the Motives, which he alledges, why God E wrought this Deliverance for theſe three men; they are four.

I. *Quia Servi. He hath delivered his ſervants.* See now he ſpeaks honourably of theſe men, accounts them the *ſervants of the moſt high God:* Before, he eſteemed them factious, refractory, turbulent men, ſuch, as will be wiſer, forſooth! then all the World, go againſt the publick proceedings; but now he is compelled to teſtifie for them, that they are holy, and religious men, and what they have done, was in the

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the ſervice of their God. Thoſe, whom the great Ones of the World malign, and perſecute, theſe they ſhall one day acknowledge them the bleſſed ſervants of God. The Wiſe man ſpeaks to this purpoſe; *This is he, whom we ſometimes had in deriſion, and a Proverb of reproach: we, fools, accounted his life madneſs, and his end to be without honour; how is he numbred among the Children of God, and his lot is among the Saints!* Wiſd. v. 3.

And this Conſideration, That they are *his Servants*, 'tis a well-alledged Motive, why they are delivered. His faithful Service, 'tis a ſafe Protection.

1. To his Servants God promiſes Protection.

2. His Servants upon this Title they plead for Protection.

1. To ſuch he promiſes Protection. Indeed ſometimes he ſaves, and delivers others; but he covenants with his Servants to ſecure, and protect them. A Maſter ows protection to his ſervants. It concerns God, in point of honour, to reſcue ſuch from wrong. Did *David* revenge the Villany done to his ſervants by the King of *Ammon?* and ſhall not God ſtand by his ſervants, that ſtand cloſe to him? See the Charter of our Protection, *Eſa.* liv. 17. *No Weapon, that is formed againſt thee, ſhall proſper; and every tongue, that ſhall riſe againſt thee in judgment, thou ſhalt condemn. This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord*; 'tis their heritage, and portion: as we ſay, *Protection by the Laws is the Subjects Birth-right.*

2. This their Intereſt God's Servants plead, when they pray for Protection. Thus *David* prays for himſelf pleads this Priviledge, that he is God's ſervant, Pſal. lxxxvi. 2. *O ſave thy ſervant.* So again, Pſal. cxix. 17. *Deal bountifully with thy ſervant:* and yet again, *Be ſurety for thy ſervant; undertake for him.* And thus *David* pleads for the People of God, *Pſal.* xliv. 17. *We have not forgotten thee, nor dealt falſly in thy Covenant.* And ſee this plea urged by the Servants of God againſt the Apoſtate *Iſraelites*, that made war againſt them, 2 Chron. xiii. 9. 12. *Have ye not caſt out the Prieſts of the LORD, the Sons of* Aaron? *but as for us, the LORD is our God, and we we have not forſaken him, and the Prieſts, that miniſter unto the LORD, are the Sons of* Aaron--- *We keep the charge of the LORD our God, but ye have forſaken him; God himſelf is with us; fight not againſt the LORD, for you ſhall not proſper.* The poor *Gibeonites*, when they were in diſtreſs, plead thus with *Joſhua, Slack not thine hand from thy ſervants: come up to us quickly, and ſave us, and help us.*

And as God promiſes, and his people plead for it, ſo he will ſurely perform a gracious Deliverance unto his Servants. It ſhould teach us to get under this Protection; ſtrive to do him the moſt ſervice. Men ſet by good ſervants, are forward to ſpeak for them, ready to defend them. What ſaith *David? O ye ſeed of* Abraham *his ſervant.* He *ſuffered no man to do them wrong. He rebuked Kings for their ſakes.* Pſal. cv. 14. *How durſt you ſpeak again my ſervant* Moſes? *Numb.* xii. 8. That's *Primum motivum quia ſervi.* The ſecond Motive, which *Nebuchadnezzar* takes notice of, is,

II. *Quia*

II. *Quia confidentes*; Becauſe they truſted in him, therefore he delivered them. As Saint *Ambroſe* ſpeaks of Saint *Peter*'s walking upon the Water, *Super aquas ambulabat non* Petri *corpus, ſed fides*; 'Twas his Faith, that enabled him: So we may ſay of theſe men walking in the Fire; 'Twas their Faith, that enabled them, *quia confidentes*. This Motive exceedingly inclines God to deliver us. Faith in him, 'tis our chief ſecurity. The ſhield of Faith, 'tis our *Palladium*, our main Fence, and Protection. *He is a Buckler to all them that truſt in him*; Pſal. xviii. 30. He hath delivered his ſervants from dangers, even when they were fearful, and doubting; as he did his Diſciples: *O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt?* How much more ſafe ſhall they be, that fully relie on him? *They that truſt in the* LORD, *they are as impregnable as Mount* Zion, *which cannot be removed*; Pſal. cxxv. 1. The Apoſtle aſcribes this, and ſuch like deliverances to Faith, Heb. xi. 33. *Through Faith* they *ſtopt the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the Sword.* Glorious ſalvations have been wrought by Faith. Hence it is, that an Omnipotency is given to Faith. *All things are poſſible to him that believes.* And Faith hath this prevailing power with God;

1. Becauſe it aſcribes to him the glory of his notice, and ſpecial care over us. Our Faith ſaith, He knows our Souls in adverſity. His Providence is over all; *Sed curam ſibi Eccleſia vendicat.* He *is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of them that believe*; 1 Tim. iv. 10. A Weak Faith ſaith, *Lord, careſt thou not, that we periſh?* But a confident Faith ſaith, *Lord, thou doſt care for us, that we periſh not.* And then our Faith prevails thus with him,

2. Becauſe it aſcribes the glory of his power to him, that he is abundantly able to ſave us. Theſe three men ſaid confidently, *Our God is able to deliver us*, Verſe 17. Faith layes hold on God's ſtrength: when all help fails, then Faith rolls it ſelf upon God. So did *David*, when he was in an helpleſs conditon, *Pſal.* cxlvi 4, 5. *I loooked on my right hand, and beheld; but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me, no man cared for my ſoul. I cried unto thee, O* LORD, *I ſaid, thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living.* 'Twas ſo with *Jehoſaphat*, in his diſtreſs, 2 *Chron.* xx. 12. *We have no might againſt this great company, that comes againſt us, but our eyes* are *upon thee.* This truſting in God is thus prevalent,

3. Becauſe it keeps us only to uſe ſuch means for deliverance, as God allows us. Infidelity will make us ſhift for our ſelves in unlawful wayes. Thus did King *Ahaz*, when God offered him his help, if he would truſt to him: he would not reſt on him; but ſent to the King of *Aſſyria*, who helped him not. Engage thy ſelf in any wicked way, and thou doſt diſengage God from protecting, and ſaving thee. He gives his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in thy lawful ways, not in thine Extravagant adventures upon ſinful courſes to ſave thy ſelf. Our truſting in God is thus prevailing,

4. Becauſe it teaches us to relie on him without limitation: neither

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ther prescribing time, or way, how, or when he should deliver us; but leaves all to him in an holy submission. A Christian will not relie upon God in a *Bethulian* confidence: If God will save us within such a time, we will wait upon him; if not, we will shift for our selves, comply with any other means of help. No; Faith will say, 'Tis good to trust, and to *wait for the salvation of God*, Lam. iii. 16. He, that *believes, will not make haste*; but stay God's leisure. A

The third Motive, why God delivered them, is,

III. *Quia constantes*; because they were constant in their Religion. That is express'd in these words; *They have changed the Kings word.* They would not be over-born by the King's Command, and to sin against God. Some Translate it, *Secundaverunt verbum Regis*; they *esteemed it in the second place*, as inferiour to the Word and Commandment of God. I; this is a good Trial of our constancy in God's Service: when God's Law calls one way, and man's law calls another way, 'tis Piety then, not to obey men, that we may obey God. 'Twas the resolute Answer of the Apostles to the unlawful commands of the *Jewish* Rulers, Acts v. 29. *We ought to obey God rather then men.* We must obey our Superiours in subordination to God, not in opposition against God: *Non debet minor potestas irasci si major Prælata est.* Aug. *Da veniam, Imperator; tu carcerem, Deus gehennam minatur.* Excuse me, O Emperour; thou threatnest death, but God threatneth damnation. There is greater duty, and greater safety to obey God rather then man. B C

And the expression, 'tis observable.

1. 'Tis *immutaverunt*, 'tis not *contempserunt*. They *changed the King's word*; but they did not contemn it. *Non contemne potestatem, sed elige majori servire.* They did not perform the King's command; but yet they did not contemptuously scorn it. They brought no railing accusation, they spake not evil of Dignities; but reverenced that authority, which they durst not obey. See this spirit of meekness, and reverence in Christ's Disciples towards their Superiours, though wicked men. The two Disciples, that went to *Emmaus*, speaking of the *Jews*, their murthering of Christ, how do they express it? *The chief Priests, and our Rulers, condemned him to death*; Luke xxiv. 20. They mention not them with any reproachful Language; use words of reverence, and due acknowlegement. D

2. Tis *immutârunt verbum Regis*, tis not *immutârunt statum Regis*: disclaiming his Authority, renouncing their Loyalty, and Allegiance to him. The Traytours of this day took another course with their King. If they could not make him change his word, in forbidding their Superstition, they would force him upon another change. Crown, and Kingdom, and Life, and all, must be changed; and the whole Nation cast into a woful desolation. E

So then, here is the proof of their constancy, *They changed the King's word*, and would not fulfil it.

Then,

A Then,

First, The enquiry must be, *How they are said to change the word of the King?*

I. *Non contempserunt*; *ut suprá.*

II. They did not *change the King's word*, by disclaiming his Authority, saying, that he was not their lawful Sovereign, but an Heathen, Idolatrous Prince. 'Tis the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, that *Pagan*, or *Heretical Princes have no right to govern.* Nay, one of them saith, that Christ, by that speech of his, Mark x. 42. *The Great Ones amongst the* Gen-
B tiles *exercise authority over them, but so it shall not be amongst you*, doth utterly abolish all Civil Government, and destroys Magistracy. This,

1. 'Tis a Doctrine contrary to the practice of St. *Paul*; who acknowledged *Cæsar* to be his lawful Sovereign, and appealed to him, as to his supreme Judge, Act. xxv. 10 *I stand at* Cæsar's *Tribunal, where I ought to be judged: I appeal unto* Cæsar.

2. 'Tis a Doctrine contrary to the practice of the Primitive Christians; who obeyed, and prayed for Heathen Princes, for their life, and posperity.

C 3. 'Tis a Doctrine contrary to the practice of Chist himself; that submitted to *Pontius Pilate*, the Emperor's Deputy, acknowledged his authority to be given him from heaven.

Secondly, The Enquiry must be, *How may* Christians *do thus? follow this example, change the word of their Superiours, refuse to obey them?*

1. It must be in Case of manifest opposition to God's holy Laws, and Commandments. When our earthly Governours command that, which God's Word doth absolutely, and clearly forbid: then we must stick to St. *Peter*'s resolution, *We must*
D *obey God rather then men:* But, in seemingly ambiguous Cases, we must yield obedience without quarrelsom disputation. The errors of Obedience in this Case, are, like the errors of Charity, pardonable, and excusable.

2. The withdrawing our Obedience must be with Protestation of our Loyalty, and subjection. Though this ungodly command we do not do; yet we must not fling off, and *blow a Trumpet*, and cry, with *Sheba*, *What part have we in* David? *To your tents, O* Israel.

3. It must be done with submission to the Magistrate's censure, by
E yielding passive obedience to suffer, when God forbids active obedience: as these holy men did; they yielded their bodies to Torment, without any resistance.

We come to the last Motive, that graciously inclined God to work this deliverance; that is,

IV. *Quia fortes, & Martyres*: they *yielded their bodies, that they might not serve, nor worship any other God, but only their own God.*

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And the goodneſs of this their pious adhering to God will appear in two things; A

Firſt, In their abſolute refuſal of this Idolatrous Command.

Secondly, In their ready yielding to the penalty of it, upon their refuſal.

Firſt, See the fulneſs of their refuſal.

I. They were not enjoyned any denyal, or renouncing of their own God, a giving-over of their Religion; but only there was required of them a joynt acknowledgment of another God with him. They were not forbidden to worſhip the *God of their Fathers*; but required to worſhip alſo the God of *Nebuchadnezzar*: yet that they refuſed. B

II. Their piety appears in that, they would not perform ſo much as one act of unlawful, and ſuperſtitious Worſhip, not yield to the King in doing of one Idolatrous action. It may be connivence might have been uſed afterwards; do it but now at the great Solemnity, ye may forbear hereafter. No; a good Chriſtan will not yield to the doing of any one act of ſuperſtitious Worſhip. Thus the Primitive Chriſtians refuſed to caſt in a little Frankincenſe into the fire upon an Idolatrous Altar. *Non licet exigua thuris impenſa.*

III. They refuſe to do any outward bodily adoration, to honour this Idol, with an outward geſture, by bowing, or bending to it. Many a Politician would ſay, *What great harm in ſuch a geſture?* to put off my Hat, or to bend my knee only, ſo I keep my heart true to God? Why? God is a Spirit: if I worſhip him in Spirit, all will be well, though I yield my bodily reverence to an Idol. True; God is a Spirit. C

1. *Sed tu non es Spiritus.* Thy Body muſt do homage to him, as well as thy Soul.

2. *Frater non eſt Spiritus.* Thy Brother, he is not only Spirit. If he ſees thee worſhip an Idol, thou layeſt a ſcandal for his ruin.

3. *Deus fecit corpus.* God made thy Body, as well as thy Soul, and ſo requires the integrity of ſoul, and body, as due to him. And ſuch was the Piety of theſe holy men, they reſerve all to God, deny all to an Idol. 'Twas *David*'s reſolution, I will not name the Name of Idols, give not the leaſt honour to them, *Pſal.* xvi. 4. D

IV. They are not moved with the general example, and concurrence of all others, can be content to be accounted ſingular, and bear the ſcorn, and reproach of a diſſenting multitude. *Non erubeſcunt paucitate ſuâ.* The crowd ſhall not carry them away; As he ſaid, that went to Maſs, *Eamus ad communem errorem.* Let's yield to the common Errour. No; the Torrent, and ſtream of the common practice ſhall not carry them to Idolatry. E

V. They will not yield, though to avoid, and eſcape an imminent, and a deadly danger. They will not admit of the leaſt Worſhip of an Idol to eſcape the greateſt Torment. They will not ſuffer only ſome petty Penalties, and amerciaments: no, Life it ſelf, it's not dear to them; but they will loſe it for their God.

So

A So then, will not these men joyn the Worship of an Idol together with the Worship of their own God, and that not in the least degree, nor yet to avoid the greatest Torment? The Point from hence to be learned, and practised, is thus much, That *No false Worship is to be joyned with the Religious Worship of the true God.*

First, This Truth was typified in the Levitical Law; *Levit.* xix. where all blending, and mixture of divers Religions are Typically forbidden. They were not *to sow their lands with diveers sorts of seeds*, Verse 19. What did that signifie? God abhors a misceling Religion. *There were not to plow with an Ox, and an Ass*; that is, we must not B draw in the same Yoke with Idolaters, not be Yoke-fellows with them in their Religion. They were not *to wear garments made of Linnen and Woollen*; one thred made it unlawful: God will not endure a Linsie-Woolsie Religion. They were not *to suffer Beasts of divers kinds to engender together*; 'tis monstrous, and unnatural: God will not endure a mongrel Religion. By all which, Communion with Idolaters is forbidden; and purity, and simplicity, and sincerity in the Worshlp of God is prescribed.

Secondly, This was represented in that Destruction, that God brought upon *Dagon*, the Idol of the *Philistines*. The *Philistines* C placed the Ark of God in the Temple of *Dagon*: God would not endure any such neighbourhood, or conjunction. God will not become an Inmate to any Idol, not have his Worship lodge under the same roof. What saith God in *Ezekiel*, xliii. 8? *They shall not set their Thresholds by my Thresholds, nor their Posts by my Posts.* He abhors any bordering of Idolatry near his Worship. Thus God evidences his displeasure in these mixtures of Religion in them that practised it. 2 *Kings* xvii. 33. 'tis said, *The People feared the* LORD, *and yet served other Gods: therefore God sent Lions amongst them, that destroyed the People.*

D *Thirdly*, This mixture in Religion, to serve the Lord, and yet withall to conform to the Worship of any other God; 'tis contrary,

I. To the Unity of God. Deny his Unity, and ye deny his Deity. *The LORD is one, and his Name his one*, saith the Prophet *Zechary*, Chap. xiv. 9.

II. 'Tis contrary to his Sovereignty. He is the only Ruler, the only Potentate; 1 Tim. vi. 15. *To him only must all knees bow*; all Creatures must do him homage.

III. This Worship of any other God, but only of the true God, 'tis contrary to the All-sufficiency of God. The Heathens worshipped E several Gods, as thinking several Gods did bestow several blessings. They begged Health of one God, Wealth of another, Victory of a third God; thus imagining to themselves several Deities for several supplies. But our God is abundantly able to supply all our wants. Their God is but a *Jupiter*, a partial helper, an Auxiliary God; whereas our God is *Jehovah*; an All-sufficient bestower of all good things. *He is able to do abundantly above all that we ask, or think*; Eph. iii. 20.

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How ill did God take it of *Ahaziah*, King of *Israel*, that he sent to *Baalzebub*, the God of *Ekron*, for recovery of his health? What saith God to him by his Prophet *Elias? Is it not, because there is not a God in* Israel, *that thou sendest to enquire of the God of* Ekron? It cost him his life for it, 2 *Kings* i. A

IV. This joyning other Gods with the true God; 'tis opposite, and contrary to the nature of Religion; that leads us to the worship of one only God. God commanded His People to use one Altar, in Sign, and Testimony of one God to be worshipped. Hence it is, that,

1. Religion, 'tis *Vinculum*; it puts a Bond upon us, ties us strictly to the adhering to one God alone. B

2. Religion, 'tis *Pactum*, a Covenant, and indenting our service, our strength, our devotion only to our God. *We cannot serve God, and Mammon,* saith Christ. God requires all, will not share with any other God.

3. Religion, 'tis *Matrimonium*; Religion doth Espouse us, and Marry us to God. Saint *Paul* tells us, he hath *Espoused us to one Husband, that he may present us a chast Virgin unto Christ*, 2 Cor. xi. 2. And what saith God to his People? *Hosea* iii. He complains of them, that *they look to other Gods*; but he saith unto them, *Verse* 3. *Thou shalt not be for another man, so will I also be for thee.* God is therefore called a *Jealous God,* impatient of any corrival. Yea, this is the Chastity of Religion, to cleave only to God. Pagans, and Heathens, they are for any, for many Gods: but Piety knows no other, but one. Hence is it, that the Idolatry of the Heathen is compared in Scripture to simple Fornication; but the Idolatry of God's people is compared to Adultery; because they are wedded to God in spiritual matrimony. Thus God charges Idolatrous *Israel* with this sin of Adultery; *Thou hast not been as an Harlot; but as a Wife that commits adultery, which taketh strangers, instead of her husband*, Ezek. xvi. 31, 32. C D

We have seen the refusal of these men to worship any other God, but only their own God; yet one thing remains, that's their ready yielding themselves to undergo the penalty, and to suffer Martyrdom. They *yielded their bodies*, would undergo death, rather then commit Idolatry.

And this their yielding hath four things observable in it.

I. It is passive; they yield themselves to be put to death; they did not rush upon death by their own procurement. It was the practice of some mis-believing Christians, as the *Donatists*, rather then they would conform to the Religion enjoyned, they would make away, and destroy themselves. No; that's not lawful: we must not have our hands in our own destruction. *Cyprian* tells the Christians in his Time, that were ambitious of Martyrdom, *Non est in tua potestate, sed in Dei dignatione martyrium.* We must not run to it, till God calls us to it. Christian Fortitude is seen *non in aggrediendis*, E

A *grediendis, sed in sustinendis periculis*: do not incur Persecution; but patiently undergo it.

II. Their yielding their bodies, 'tis submissive: they yielded themselves, did not stubbornly oppose, and struggle against it. *David* and *Paul* compare the sufferings of Martyrs to the butchering of Sheep; *For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter*, Rom. viii. 36. Christians suffer as Sheep, not as Lions, or Tigers. Yes; here is the patience of the Saints. As 'tis said of Christ, Esai. liii 7. *He was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter: and as a Sheep before the Shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth; but only*
B *to pray for his persecutours.*

III. Their yielding was plenary, and full. They *yielded their bodies*; they were not content to undergo some less sufferings, the loss of their places, which were great in the Province; but they engage their lives for the honour of their God. Satan set a stint to *Job*'s suffering; he thought he might suffer some other losses, and still hold his integrity: but, if it came to touch his bone, and his flesh, then he would shrink. No; saith *Paul, My life is not dear to me*: he will lay down that to keep his Religion. Canst thou dye for thy God? if not, thou art no servant for him.

C IV. Their suffering, tis voluntary. Yielding betokens a willing parting with, and resigning up their lives. They were passive in the incurring of death; but active in the acceptance. Even enforced sufferings are made voluntary by our acceptation of them. Thus Christ Catechised the two sons of *Zebedee*; *Can you drink of the Cup, that I must drink of? and be baptized with the Baptism, that I must be baptized with?* the cup of Martyrdom, the Baptism in blood? Yes, they answer, they were willing to undergo it. See how willing *Paul* was to suffer Martyrdom; *If I be offered up, upon the sacrifice, and service of your Faith, I joy, and rejoyce with you all*, Phil. ii. 17. 'Tis
D St. *Peter*'s exhortation, *Let none suffer as an evil-doer; but, if ye suffer as* Christians, *be not ashamed, but glorifie God in this behalf*, 1 Pet. iv. 16.

E

ON

ON
The GUNPOVVDER-TREASON,

The Third Sermon.

MICAH vi. 5.

O my People, remember now what Balak, *King of* Moab, *conſulted, and what* Balaam, *the Son of* Beor, *anſwered him from* Shittim *unto* Gilgal, *that ye may know the Righteouſneſs of the* LORD.

THE Chapter, 'tis a Pathetical Expoſtulation of God with his Choſen People of the *Jews* for their ungracious demeanour and miſcarriage towards him.

And this Expoſtulation is carried in a gracious manner. He proceeds not againſt them *ſummo jure*, uſes not the advantage of his Royal Prerogative, charging them with Sin, and preſently puniſhing; but tempers his proceeding with much moderation, condeſcending to them by way of Debate and Parly; and ſubmits his Cauſe and Complaint to Trial. The Prophet calls it here *a Controverſie*, Verſe 2. *Moſes* terms it *querela fœderis*, the *quarrel of his Covenant*, Levit. xxvi. 25. gives them leave, and liberty to charge him, if they can, and diſcharge themſelves. Thus he dealt with *Job*; *Gird up thy loins like a man, and I will demand of thee, and anſwer me*, Chap. xxxviii. 3. Thus alſo he proceeds with the *Jews*, Jerem. ii. 9. *I will yet plead with you, ſaith the* LORD, *and with your childrens children will I plead.* Surely, 'tis a marvellous vouchſafing of God, thus to lay off his Majeſty. Saint *Auguſtine* * obſerves the great manſuetude of Chriſt in that Speech, *Which of you can accuſe me of Sin?* That he, that came to ſave Sinners, ſhould put himſelf to this trial of his Innocency: ſee, if any man can charge him with any Sin; to deſcend

* *Tract.* 42. in *Evang.* Joan.

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deſcend from his Tribunal, to referr the Cauſe to be judged, and debated, and to ſuffer us to anſwer what we can for our ſelves. *Ut Juſtitia punire videatur, & non poteſtas*, ſaith *Salvian:* that if he puniſhes us, it may appear, 'tis Juſtice, that afflicts us, and not Power and Strength only. It ſhould teach us to provide our ſelves, how to anſwer God in theſe Debates and Controverſies, when he comes to reckon with us, and to *write bitter things againſt us. Conſider*, ſaith Chriſt, *Whether thou canſt meet him that comes againſt thee with twenty thouſand*; or elſe ſend Ambaſſadours for Peace, and try, if thou canſt turn this Debate and Controverſie, into a Treaty of Pacification. A

Now, in this Chapter, God pleads the Juſtice and Equity of his Cauſe by a threefold Argument: B

Firſt, By an Atteſtation of the dumb, and ſenceleſs Creatures, *Verſ.* 1. *Contend thou before the Mountains, and let the Hills hear thy voice.* Thus *Eſai* begins God's quarrel with his People, *Hear, O Heavens, hearken, O Earth.* And God pleaſes to uſe this Atteſtation of the Creatures, calls upon them, *ut Teſtes Benignitatis*, as Witneſſes of his goodneſs to his People. 'Tis an uſual Evidence that God makes of his gracious Proceedings, to call to witneſs the whole Frame of the Creation. And may he not take the like courſe with us? Surely, his bleſſings upon this Nation have been ſo evident, that if we ſhould forget, or deny them, or deface the Records, and Monuments of them, the dumb Creatures would riſe up, and bear witneſs of them. *If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the Stones would cry*, ſaith Chriſt. The Stones in the ſtreet will teſtifie his Mercy in ceaſing of Plagues, and Sickneſſes from amongſt us. The Waves of the Sea will witneſs our Deliverance in *Eighty Eight.* The *Stone out of the Wall will cry, and the Beam out of the Timber will anſwer*, and record this Day's glorious ſalvation from the *Powder-Treaſon.* C

Secondly, A ſecond Argument of God's goodneſs towards them, 'tis by an Appeal and Reference he makes to themſelves. He deſires no other Judges, or Witneſſes; but the Verdict of their own Conſciences, and the impartial confeſſion of their own hearts. He referrs it to themſelves to teſtifie, whether his ways towards them have not been Mercy and Truth. *O my People, What have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? teſtifie againſt me*; Verſe 3. If I have failed in any Promiſe, been wanting to thee in any Mercy, not performed all that good Word which I have ſpoken to thee. I; Here is the triumph of God's Cauſe, *He cannot but be juſtified when he is judged*, his Adverſaries themſelves being witneſſes, and ſelf-condemning Judges. Our Tongues may deny it, as thoſe at the *day of Judgment, When did we do ſo, and ſo?* but our Hearts will condemn us, and juſtifie God's juſt, and holy, and gracious proceedings. D E

Thirdly, A third Argument of God's goodneſs towards them, is by a particular commemoration of many Bleſſings beſtowed upon them. And he inſiſts upon three main Fundamental Bleſſings; by all which he manifeſts his favour toward them, and aggravates their impiety, and ingratitude againſt him.

The

A The Benefits are all Mercies of the first Magnitude, all necessarily concurring to the making up of a Nation's happiness.

First, The first is *Gratiosa redemptio*. He found them not a Nation, or Free People; but he made them so: he rescued, and delivered them from slavery, and bondage. Verse 4. *I brought thee up out of the land of* Egypt, *and redeemed thee out of the house of servants*. And it was a great Redemption.

I. 'Twas a Redemption from a long, and tedious bondage; not like that of the *Babylonian* Captivity, for seventy; but for hundreds of years.

B II. 'Twas a grievous and miserable bondage; they were worn out with labour, oppressed with drudgery.

III. 'Twas a vile and base bondage; a slavery to slaves. The *Egyptians* were *Cham*'s Posterity, and he was cursed to be a *servant of servants*. Surely, redemption from such a bondage, 'twas a great Mercy; never to be forgotten; an Obligation it was of an eternal Duty. *Thou hast saved us from our enemies, be thou King over us.*

This is our Case just. Our God hath freed us not only from Satan, that spiritual *Pharaoh*, and Furnace of Hell; but from *Romish Pharaohs*, Tyrants of souls, and bodies. We may take up the
C Prophet *Esay*'s Confession in his twenty sixth Chapter, *O Lord, our God, other Lords besides thee have had dominion over us: but they are dead, — thou hast destroyed them, — and thou hast encreased the Nation, O LORD, thou hast encreased the Nation.* That's the first Mercy, a gracious Redemption.

Secondly, The second is *Gratiosa gubernatio*; the placing a gracious Administration, and Government over them: that's a farther encrease, and addition of Mercy. Otherwise, to free them from bondage, and leave them to themselves, in a lawless, unbridled, licentious liberty, it had been a greater misery. Much better to live under bad Go-
D vernours, than under none at all. Tyranny is a better condition than a lawless Anarchy. Hear what the Scripture saith, *There was no King in* Israel, *and every man did that which was good in his own eyes*. Why? so we would have it, do what we list: Well, mark what comes of it; that Speech is thrice repeated in this Book of *Judges*, as a reason of three outragious Villanies. *Micha*, and his old doting Mother, must needs up with an Idol; and up it went. The reason is given, *There was no King in* Israel, *every man did that which was right in his own eyes*: Come to Church, or stay at home, follow any Seducer, embrace any Religion, though never so erroneous. Again, 'tis repeated as a reason
E of Robbery and Burglary. The *Danites* break into an house: What was the reason of that? *There was no King in* Israel; every man fell to plunder and spoil. Yet again, that Speech is repeated: there was an an horrible Rape committed; a Woman violently, and shamefully abused: How came that to pass? what was the reason of that? The Spirit of God gives this for a reason, *Judg.* xix. 1. *There was no King in* Israel. Well; the Text tells us, God provided against

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this miſchief, he ſets over them Rulers, and Governours, according to his own heart. *I ſent before thee*, Moſes, Aaron, *and* Miriam. *Moſes*, the Supreme Magiſtrate; God inveſted him with Royal Authority; Moſes *commanded us a Law*; — *he was a King in* Jeſurun; *Deut.* xxxiii. 4, 5. a wiſe, a gracious, a vigilant, and carefull Leader, and Governour over them. Nay, he did not only frame them into a Common-wealth, ſet a Civil Magiſtrate over them; but he provided for their ſouls, pitched his Tabernacle amongſt them: He ſent before them *Aaron* the High-Prieſt, to teach them, to be for them in things concerning God, and to pray for them; and withall joyned to him *Miriam* a Propheteſs, for extraordinary aſſiſtance in that Miniſtration. Thus *he made them a Royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, his own pleſant plant.* A B

And hath he not dealt thus graciouſly with us alſo? Firſt, gave us Queen *Elizabeth*, a *Miriam*, a *Deborah*, a Mother in our *Iſrael*; then gave us King *James*, a wiſe, a learned, a gracious Governour; and then eſtabliſhed a bleſſed Succeſſour on his Throne, *The Light of our Eyes, the Breath of our Noſtrils, the Crown of our Head, his dear Anointed*; and then, made us not only a Nation, but a Church too, provided *Aarons*, and *Eleazars*, the ſound of whoſe Bells, the ſmell of whoſe Pomegranates hath continued amongſt us; Reverend Prelates, and Paſtours, holding up a bleſſed light of Truth to us. Well; let *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, murmure, and mutiny, we will take up King *David*'s thankfull acknowledgment in the ſeventy ſeventh Pſalm, *Thou leadeſt thy People like a Flock, by the hand of* Moſes *and* Aaron. That's the ſecond Bleſſing, a gracious Government. C

Thirdly, The third Bleſſing is, *gratioſa protectio*. He, having freed them from bondage, and ſetled them under an happy, and holy Government, he watches over them, againſt all attempts of their malicious enemies. 'Tis not ſufficient to be once reſcued, and ſetled in peace, Satan dogs them ſtill, ſtirs up, and ſuborns treacherous ſpirits to conſpire their ruine: and here we ſee God interpoſes, and defends them. Leſt any man aſſail them, he watches over them day and night. He defeated *Balack*, and *Balaam*'s Conſpiracy. And this makes up the full ſum, and meaſure of God's goodneſs to his people. D

And this was our Caſe too; we had a *Balack*, and a *Balaam*, the *Pope* and his Complices, that plotted our ruin, contrived our deſtruction; which makes this text to be a Text in ſeaſon. This Scripture 'tis this day fulfilled. *Let us remember what* Balack *conſulted, and what* Balaam *anſwered, that we may underſtand the righteouſneſs of the* LORD.

The Text then, 'tis a Commemoration of God's gracious protection, in delivering his People from a miſchievous intendment, that was plotted againſt them In it take notice of three particulars. E

Firſt, The Commemoration it ſelf, in theſe words; *O my People, remember.*

Secondly, The Benefit and Bleſſing to be commemorated: and that ſtands upon two Evidences:

Firſt,

A *Firſt*, Is the Danger that beſet them: that's in theſe words; *What* Balack, *King of* Moab, *conſulted*.

Secondly, Is the Iſſue out of this Danger, which God gave to them: that's in theſe words; *What* Balaam, *the Son of* Beor, *anſwered him*.

Thirdly, The End and Purpoſe, both of the deliverance, and of the Commemoration of it; *That ye may underſtand the righteouſneſs of the* LORD.

Come we,

Firſt, To the act of Commemoration; *O my People, remember now.*

B And here offer themſelves two things conſiderable;

Firſt, Here is a gracious Compellation; *O my People.*

Secondly, Here is a forcible quickning of their Memory to recount their deliverance; *Remember now.*

Firſt, Here is a gracious Compellation; *O my People*: and it imports three things;

I. It is a ſpeech of Claim, and Poſſeſſion. He challenges them to be his People, avoucheth his right, and intereſt in them. They have eſtranged themſelves from him, all the ſort of them, and ſet up other Gods to themſelves; both *Samaria* and *Jeruſalem*, had their High-

C places, and Idolatrous Worſhips; they are charged with it, *Chap.* i. 5. What then? God here makes them know, they are his People ſtill; his right is indefeaſable. We may forfeit our right in God; but we cannot make void his right in us. We may deprive our ſelves of the comforts, and benefit of his Covenant; but we cannot free our ſelves of the bond, and duty, and obligation of it. It ſets an indelible Character upon us. In *Ezekiel*'s time the People took themſelves free to forſake the Lord, and chooſe other Gods; but what ſaith God to them? Chap. xx. 32.—*That which cometh into your minde, ſhall not be at all, that ye ſay, we will be as the Heathen, as the Families of the Countreys, to*

D *ſerve Wood, and Stone. As I live, ſaith the* LORD *God, Surely with a mighty hand, and with a ſtretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you.* Verſe 37. *And I will cauſe you to paſs under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the Covenant.* 'Tis too late for us to chooſe a new God, we are engaged to the LORD in a bond of Covenant, of his own drawing, and he will hold us to it.

II. *O my People*; 'Tis a ſpeech of Love, and Affection. As the former ſence will drive them to him, ſo this will draw them. Here is not only the bonds of Right; but the cords of Love, the ſtirring of his Bowels, the melting of his compaſſions, and affection towards them.

E There was a time, when, in his diſpleaſure, he would not thus own them; but thruſt them from him. *Exod.* xxxii. 7. *The* LORD *ſaid to* Moſes, *Thy People, which thou broughteſt out of* Egypt, *have corrupted themſelves.* He diſclaims them there from being his any more: *Populus iſte, This People*, and *Populus tuus, Thy People*; words of eſtrangement, and alienation. But this Scripture offers more Grace. He cannot ſmother, or conceal his tenderneſs over them. 'Tis good to

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lay hold on this Compellation; 'tis all we can ſhew for any bleſſing we expect, that he pleaſes to have a favour to us, and to eſteem us his own. As the *Syrians*, when the King of *Iſrael* ſaid, *My Brother* Ben-hadad: they catch'd at that ſpeech of grace, and preſently replyed, *Thy Brother* Ben-hadad. *I will ſay unto them, Thou art my People; and they ſhall ſay, Thou art my God*, Hoſea ii. 23. Were it not for this, what reaſon can be given of ſo long forbearance, of ſo many deliverances, with which he hath bleſs'd us? Leſs ſins in others have brought deſtruction; why do we eſcape? 'Tis, becauſe he bears a favour unto us. As *David* gave *Joab* charge, *Spare my ſon* Abſalom, *entreat him gently for my ſake*; he was his Darling: ſo God gives a charge to his judgments, that he ſends upon us, not to deſtroy us. Why? We have been his Darling Church, *the People of his good pleaſure.*

III. *O my people*: 'Tis a ſpeech of Recall, and Invitation, wooing them by this compellation to return unto him. They have wretchedly caſt him off, but yet he hath not caſt off them. *Return, thou backſliding* Iſrael, *and I will heal your back-ſlidings: Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the* LORD *our God*; Jer. iii. 22. Thus God pleads with the *Jews*; Pſal. lxxxi. 8. *Hear, O my People, and I will teſtifie unto thee.* And again, *Verſe* 13. *O that my People had hearkened unto me!* So again, God pleads with his People, aſſures them he hath not caſt them off; but there is hope of Mercy. Eſai. l. 1. *Where is the Bill of your Mother's divorcement? or, which of my Creditors is it, to whom I have ſold you?* Unkinde Husbands would, upon any occaſion, divorce their Wives: unnatural Parents would ſell their Children, and pay their debts with them: but yet God invites his People to reconciliation. Nay, though he had divorced them, yet he aſſures them, he will again receive them. Men might not do ſo in their divorcements. Jer. iii. 1. *But, though thou haſt played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return again to me, ſaith the* LORD. That's the Compellation.

Now follows,

Secondly, The *Memento* he gives them, the quickning of their Memory: *Remember now.* He reports himſelf to his former dealings, appeals to his ancient mercies, bids them look back to the times of old, bids them *remember the days of the right hand of the moſt High.*

Obſerve, *'Tis God's care, and ſhould be ours, to keep a freſh Memory of his gracious deliverances.* To this purpoſe, we ſee, that God ſtill kept theſe Mercies done to his People upon record, he left them not to their account; but,

I. Filed them up in his Sanctuary, regiſtred them up in his Holy Book.

II. To make them the more memorable, they were framed into Songs of Commemoration, that they might be remembred with greater delight. We have *Moſes* his Song, and *Miriam* her Anthem. *Eſai.* he pens a Song of Thankſgiving before-hand for the People's Return out of Captivity; Chap. xxvi. *In that day ſhall this Song be ſung in the land of* Judah; *We have a ſtrong City: Salvation will God appoint*

A *appoint for Walls and Bulwarks. David* pens his cv, cvi, cvii. Pſalms; they are all ſpent in recounting of God's glorious Deliverances.

III. God is ſo careſull they ſhould be remembred, that he makes theſe Mercies the form of an Oath: *You ſhall ſay, The* LORD *lives, that brought us out of the North-Country, whither I had driven them*; Jerem. xxiii. 8.

IV. More than ſo, He inſtituted and founded a Sacrament, as a religious Commemoration of their Deliverance; the Paſs-over was ordained to keep in remembrance their freedom from *Egypt*.

And theſe Remembrances are of ſpecial uſe to us:

B 1. They are provocations of Thankfulneſs. Memory, 'tis the Monitor, and Pompter of Thankfulneſs. A forgetfull man is always an unthankfull man. *David* confeſſes this fault in the *Iſraelites*: *Our Fathers underſtood not thy wonders in* Egypt; *they remembred not the multitude of thy mercies: but provoked him at the Sea, even at the* Red-Sea. Why? did they not ſing a Song of thankfulneſs at the *Red-Sea*? Yes, but they ſoon forgot it. Preſent enjoyment of Mercies may affect us for a time, but God looks for more at our hands: nor that we ſhould put him off with preſent acknowledgment; but honour his Mercies with a laſting remembrance of his former Favours. *Hezekiah*, (2 Chron. C xxxii.) bleſſed God for his deliverance from death, and penned a Song of it; but his thankfulneſs continued not, it was not long-lived, and laſting, *He rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him.* What ſaith *David? The* LORD *hath ſo wrought his wondrous works, that they ought to be had in remembrance.* Eſpecially,

1. National Mercies, that all have a ſhare in. Theſe are not his *Opuſcula*, his leſſer Works; but his *Opera*, his *Magnalia*, his mighty Works, his marvellous Acts.

2. Fundamental Mercies, as Preſervations from ruin and deſtruction. Such was this Deliverance from *Balak*; ſuch was ours D from this day's Conſpiracy. Had it taken place, we had not been a Church, a Nation, a Kingdom; but a miſerable company of murthered, or enſlaved Caitiffs. Such Deliverances challenge a thankfull remembrance.

2. Theſe Remembrances, they are Obligations to obedience; and ſo God intends them. Theſe Commemorations, they are not Exprobrations what God hath done for us; but forcible incitements to duty, and of ſervice. Servant comes *à ſervando*. Having preſerved us, he means not we ſhould live as we liſt; but devote our ſelves to his faithfull ſervice. *David* makes this the end of all God's Mercies, *That* E *they might obſerve his Statutes, and keep his Laws*; Pſal. cv. 45. 'Tis God's Expoſtulation with the *Jews*, Jer. vii. 10. *Will ye ſay, We are delivered to do all theſe abominations? Do ye thus requite the* LORD, *ye fooliſh people, and unwiſe?* Our grand deliverance from Hell, gives a rule for all other deliverances. What was the end of that? Saint *Paul* tells us, 2 Cor. v. 15. *He died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves; but unto him which died for them.*

He

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He hath therefore saved us, because he means to employ us. *Ezra* makes this use of their rescue out of Captivity, Chapter ix. *Seeing that thou, our God, hast given us such deliverance, as this; should we again break thy Commandments?* And holy *Zachary* tells us thus much, *That we, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve him in holiness, and righteousness all the days of our life*; Luke i. 74, 75.

3. These remembrances of former Deliverances are encouragements for our Faith to relie, and trust unto him for after-deliverances. These are the reasonings, and collections of Faith, as we see it in St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. i. 10. *Who hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust, that he will yet deliver us.* Thus *David* argued, and strengthened his Faith; *That God, which delivered me from the Lion and the Bear; he will deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine*, 1 Sam. xvii. 37. The Psalmist abounds in this experimental confidence; *Psal.* xliv. praying for freedom from enemies, he puts God in minde of his former Mercies, Verse 1. *We have heard with our ears, O God, our Fathers have told us, what works thou didst in their days, in the times of old.* So, *Psal.* xlviii. he bids them, *mark well his favours to Jerusalem, that they might tell it to the generations following: for this God is our God, for ever, and ever, he will be our guide unto death.* So again, in the one hundred and sixth Psalm, having recounted God's former mercies to his People, mark the use he makes of them; *Deliver us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the Heathen.* And *Esay* pleads for help upon former experiences; Chap. li. ix. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O Arm of the LORD, awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.* Art not thou He, that delivered us in *Eighty eight?* art not thou he that saved us from the *Powder-Treason? Save us now, LORD*, and help us when we call upon thee.

We now proceed to the

Second thing, the Benefit it self to be commemorated: And therein,

First, Of the Danger that did beset them; that's in these words, *What*, Balak *King of* Moab, *consulted:* (and, for the understanding of this, we must reflect on the Story in the Book of *Numbers*) And in it consider three things:

I. The Ground of it.

II. The Manner of it.

III The Matter of this Conspiracy.

I. What was the Ground, why *Balak* did thus seek the ruin, and overthrow of the People of God? Sure: look into that Story, and you will finde it was causless; he had not any provocation, why he should undertake so wicked a Conspiracy. The *Israelites* had not wronged him, nor any of his People, made no inrode into his Coutrey, no way annoyed him. God had given an expres charge to the *Israelites* to forbear all kinde of Hostility, *Deut.* ii. ix. *Distress not the* Moabites, *neither contend with them in Battel.* For the *Canaanites*

A to have conspired against the *Israelites*, there might have been some reason; they meant to conquer and destroy them: but they avoided the *Moabites*, went a far compass about, that they might not damnifie them. What was it then? Surely: here is the portion of God's Church, and Children, to be hated, and maligned without cause. What reason had the *Papists* to plot our ruin? They enjoyed the benefit of Subjects, had the protection of the King's Laws: nay, they were eased of many Penalties, some of them preferred to places of Honour. No matter; Malice is reasonless: and Envy seeks the perdition of others, though not at all provoked. That's the Ground of it.

B Such were those two Assassinates in the Book of *Esther*, *Bigtan*, and *Teresh*, that conspired the murther of King *Ahasuerus*; What moved them to it? The Text saith, *They were wroth*; sullen, discontented, angry men, that's all the reason. 'Tis like, they thought their Parts were better than their places: their abilities fitted them for greater Preferments: 'twas that, which displeased them. They took snuff at their King; and forthwith they will murther him.

II. For the Manner of this Conspiracy; that was observable upon three Grounds.

1. It was close and secret: There was no defiance bidden to *Israel*;

C but all this Conspiracy cunningly carried 'twixt *Balak* and *Balaam*; and the People of God never dreamed of it. And how closely was the Treason of this day hatched, and treated of at *Rome*, in *Spain*, in the *Low-Countreys*, even from *Shittim* unto *Gilgal*, and we in *England* utterly ignorant of it. So in *Eighty Eight*, specious Overtures, and Treaties for Peace were made, when their great Navy was to come against us. 'Twas the Watchman of *Israel* that espyed them, and discovered them, and defeated their Councels. *They digged deep, to hide their Counsels from us*; that they might surprize us with sudden destruction.

2. This Conspiracy, 'twas importunate: *Balak* will have no denyal.

D God first forbids *Balaam* to joyn in this Design, and upon it he refuses. No; he must say no Nay: Message upon message are sent and dispatch'd, till they have prevailed with him. O the eager, and unwearied importunity of Malice! Persecutions out of ignorance may take an answer, and desist, and give over; as *Saul*, that havock'd the Church, when Christ reproved him, cries out, *LORD, what wilt thou I shall do?* But Envy and Malice is endless and infinite. There may be a Truce, but there will never be Peace with the Churches enemies. As it was with the *Syrians*, though vanquished by the *Israelites*, yet, what saith God to the King of *Israel*? *Go, strengthen thy self, and mark, and see*

E *what thou doest*; *for at the return of the year, the King of* Syria *will come up against thee*, 1 King. xx. 22. How restless have the *Papists* been in their bloody attempts? Our Church may say, with the Psalmist. *Many a time, from my youth, until now.* In Queen *Elizabeth*'s Time, scarce a year, but a new Treason was hatching: as soon as miscarried of one (as, blessed be God, they miscarried in all) they were quick with another. In King *James* his Time, first *Watson*, and

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and *Clark*, two Secular Priests, they plot a Treason; but they were but Bunglers: the *Jesuits* were Craftsmasters at that trade, *skilfull to destroy*, Ezek. xxi. 31. and they undertook the *Gunpowder-Treason*. And (as unlikely as it looks) I nothing doubt, but they are busie sticklers in our present Distractions.

3. This Conspiracy of *Balak*, it was expensefull, and costly; he spares for no charges to effect his purpose. He offers large rewards to *Balaam* to joyn with him, and yield his assistance; builds many Altars, offers multitudes of Sacrifices, he will have his will of the *Israelites*, though it cost him dear. Superstition, 'tis no Niggard; but Malice and Envy are profuse and prodigal. What an offer did *Haman* make, to obtain the slaughtering of the People of the *Jews*? He will give *ten thousand Talents of Silver to the King's Coffers*, Esth. iii. 9. And, how did our *Papists* engage their Estates, waste their Inheritances, impoverish their Families, in cherishing, and pampering those cursed, and cursing *Balaams*, and for the contriving of this horrid Villany? That's the Manner of it. Come we

III. To the Matter of this Conspiracy. And, for our understanding of it, we must (as was said before) have recourse to the Relation of it in the Book of *Numbers*; xxii, xxiii, xxiv. *Chapters*. And in it we may see, and discover,

1. Some strains of Truth; at which *Balak* roved.

2. Some evidences of gross Superstition, and foul Impiety. We will touch them briefly.

1. Take notice of three Truths, implyed in this practice of *Balak*.

1. He conceived the *Israelites* stronger than himself; yet he had hope to overcome them, if he could get God to take part against them. He knew a Curse from God upon their Strength would expose them to Destruction. Not only Scripture, but Nature teaches us thus much; *That the weakness of God is stronger than men. If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?* Job xi. 10. He is the *Lord of Hosts*, able to overcome all hostility. Get him to go forth with our Armies, and *one shall chase a thousand. 'Tis all one to him to save with many, or with few*, 1 Sam. xiv. 6. When he takes against *Jerusalem*, no strength shall rescue it from the *Caldeans*. Mark what he saith, *Jer.* xxxvii. 10. *Though ye had smitten the whole Army of the* Caldeans, *that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his Tent, and burn this City with fire.* If he blesses us, we shall prosper; if he blasts us, there will be no prevailing. Take this along with you in all your designs: 'Tis *Solomon's* assurance; *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the* LORD; Prov. xxi. 30.

2. A second Truth supposed is, that *The Prophets of God, they are powerfull Instruments of denouncing, and inflicting God's Curse upon a people.* Might *Balak* get *Balaam* to curse the

the *Iſraelites* in the *Name of the* LORD, he knew that Curſe would take place; God would make it good: *He, whom thou curſeſt, is curſed.* The Church of God is built upon *Gerazim*, and *Ebal* too. There he hath commanded a Bleſſing; from thence he thunders out his Curſes and Maledictions. See our Commiſſion for both theſe, *Eſay* iii. 10. *Say ye to the righteous, That it ſhall be well with him*, pronounce a Bleſſing upon him; but ſay, *Woe to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him.* So again, 2 *Cor.* x. 6. *We have in readineſs to revenge all diſobedience.* The confidence of this, made the Kings of *Iſrael*, in all their Expeditions, to have recourſe to God's Prophets. If *Moſes* let fall his hands, *Amalek* prevails. *Jehoſhaphat*, he called for *Micaiah* to conſult with him, in his Expedition to *Ramoth-Gilead*; *Saul* to *Samuel*; the three Kings to *Eliſha*: King *Joaſh* calls him, *The Chariots and Horſemen of* Iſrael. There was a time, in our fore-fathers days, when ſome Sacrilegious Politicians moved earneſtly for the diſinheriting the Church of her Lands, and Revenues; alledging, they would ſerve to maintain Souldiers in the Kings Warrs. A ſtout, and worthy Biſhop replyed, *If you regard not the Prayers of the* Church *for God's Bleſſing in your Warrs, purſue your motion:* and that Word quelled that motion, and prevented Sacrilege. But we will venture that, and our ſouls to boot too.

3. There is yet a third Truth in *Balak*'s Conſultation. See, he eſteems this Prophet, as worthy of all honour, and reverence; ſends an honourable Embaſſy to him, meets him with all due regard, counts no preferment too good for him. Even Heathens have acknowledged, and practiſed this Truth. And yet, what dregs of time are we fallen into! Reverence and Maintenance (the *double honour*, that St. *Paul* claims, as due to them) 'tis Ambition to require it, 'tis Superſtition to afford it, 'tis Reformation to deny it, and deſpoyl them of it. It argues, the World hath a baſe eſteem of Heaven, of Grace, of their own Souls, to vilifie thoſe, that are the Meſſengers, and Managers of ſo great ſalvation.

2. Come we to the Errors in his Conſultation. In it theſe four Obliquities, four Exceptions.

1. *Exception*, It was ſuperſtitious. *Whomſoever thou curſeſt, is curſed.* What? though he doth it at all adventures? What? though he do it *clave errante?* though God gives no Commiſſion? Yes, that's all one with *Balak*; yea, or no; it makes no matter; he ſuppoſes an infallible connexion betwixt this power, and his perſon: never enquires into the the nature of his commiſſion, how it is limited, but *factum valet.* Let *Balaam* ſpeak it, and it ſhall take place. Whereas the Gift, and Grace of Prophecy, tis not habitual, but tranſient. Sometimes *Eliſha* can diſcover ſecrets; otherwhile he ſaith, *The* LORD *hath not revealed it to me.* So the Office of Bleſsing, and Abſolution, and that other of Binding, and Anathematizing, are not *ad placitum*; but muſt be regulated,

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by the warrant of the word. The like Opinion to this of *Balak*'s have the *Papists* of their *Balaam*, the Pope of *Rome*. They ascribe to him an Infallibility in all things, he is not subject to Errour; an infallibility of judgment in deciding of Controversies, and that, whether he studies it, or not, yet his determination is infallible. A desperate errour, and leaves that Church in a desperate condition. He, that will be infallible, will necessarily prove incorrigible, and so uncurable. A

2. See here another Exception, It was enforced; that's another Obliquity. *Balak* hath recourse to a Prophet in an exigent, in a supposed extremity. It seems he had no Prophets amongst his own People, took no care for any setled Worship of the true God; but now, at a pinch, he sends a message to *Balaam*, to fetch him from *Pethor*, out of the Mountains of the East: But he hath no constant recourse to the Prophets of God. Here is the guise of the World: In our Adversities, then send for God's Messengers, and crave their help; but in our Prosperity, God's Ministers are the only superfluous creatures. they may be best of all spared. *Saul*, for consultation sends for the Priest, with the *Ark of God*, but anon presently dismisses him, ere the Priest had done, bids him withdraw his hand, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 19. So *Jeroboam*, that banisht God's Prophets, and Priests, when his Son was sick, can dispatch his Wife to the Prophet in *Judah*; but otherwise, *Away, thou Seer, propheſie not at* Beth-el. Whereas *David*, though himself a Prophet, he had his *Seers* about him, *Gad* and *Nathan*, they were never from him. The People of *Israel* in their distress, Oh! they cry out for want of God's Ministers; *There is no more any Prophet*, Psal. lxxiv. 9. but, when things went well with them, they never regarded them. In our health, and welfare, we slight them, and set them at naught; but in our distress, when death draws near, and approaches to us, *Oh!* then *send for the Minister*; *Oh! how shall we do to be saved?* It were just to answer us, as *Elisha* did the King of *Israel*, *Go to the Prophets of thy Father, and thy Mother*; *see, if they can comfort thee.* B C D

3. Here is a third Exception, It was was corrupt, and mercenary; that's another Obliquity. *Balak* labours to engage the Prophet to be on his side, and to denounce God's Curse against his People by Rewards: he endeavours to corrupt him with Gifts and Bribes, and so to tie the Holy Ghost to his Purse-strings. O! 'tis a cursed Opinion, as St. *Peter* tells *Simon Magus*, to think, *that the Gift of God can be bought with Money*. *Balaam* had a good minde to *Balak*'s large offers: *He loved the wages of unrighteousness*; 2 Pet. ii. 15. But, as bad as he was, he durst not contract with him; *Neque enim pretio ulla res Dei constat*, saith *Tertullian*. *Elisha* abhorrs even after-gratifications from *Namaan* the *Syrian*. No, Money bears no sway in matters of God. All the Treasures of the World cannot purchase one Dram of Mercy. We may not bless a E

wicked

A wicked man for a whole World. *Simon Magus* miſtook his Market, to offer to chaffer with St. *Peter*. But he ſped better with St. *Peter*'s pretended Succeſſors; they have ſtruck up many a bargain with him, and ſet all to ſale. And not only there hath this Evil prevailed; but even amongſt thoſe that are far enough from *Rome*. Theſe two ſins, Simony and Sacrilege; they will never give over, till they have eaten out the very heart of Religion. Simony, that's like a lingring Conſumption, that waſtes by degrees; but Sacrilege, that's like a Peſtilential Feaver, it deſtroyes all at once. The one, Simony, that's like *Hoſee*'s Moth, *I will be to* Ephraim
B *as a Moth*, that conſumes leiſurely; the other, Sacrilege, that's like *Hoſee*'s Lion, *I will be to* Ephraim *as a Lion*, that tears and takes all away. *Hoſ.* v. 12, 14.

4. There is yet a fourth Exception, or Obliquity, in *Balak*'s conſultation, it was perverſe, and profane. What's his Plea he makes with *Balaam? I wot, that he, whom thou bleſſeſt, is bleſſed; and he, whom thou curſeſt, is curſed.* Is it ſo? Why then doth he not ſay? *Come, and bleſs me, that I may proſper, and prevail*; but, *Come, and curſe them, that I may ſmite them, and overcome them.* It had been more comfortable to have himſelf bleſſed, than to
C have his enemies curſed. This perverſe choice of his, to wiſh a curſe to others, rather than a bleſſing to himſelf, bewrays a two-fold bad diſpoſition in him.

The Firſt is, Infidelity; his evil heart tells him, he cannot expect a bleſſing from God: his prophane, irreligious heart had no ſuch affiance in God, as to hope for good from him; his guilty conſcience tells him, that Bleſſings belong not unto him. As wicked *Ahaz*, when the Prophet *Eſay* tendered him a Bleſſing, his unbelieving heart withdrew from it, that he did not accept it. And then, the other evil diſpoſition, that makes him pray not for a bleſſing on himſelf, but a curſe
D on his Foes,

Is, Secondly, the Spirit of Envy. And Envy cares not ſo much for good to it ſelf, as to ſee harm and miſchief befall another. Such a man will ſpare God in bleſſing himſelf, ſo he may ſee the man, whom he maligns, curſed by God. Whereas, 'tis the Spirit of a good man to ſtrengthen himſelf, not by calling for Curſes upon others, but by craving, and ſuing for God's Bleſſing on himſelf.

We have done with the firſt Evidence of the Bleſsing Commemorated, that's the Danger, that befet them, *Balak*'s Conſultation. Come we to the other Evidence of this Benefit; and that is,

E *Secondly*, The Iſſue out of this Danger, which God gave to them; and that's in theſe words, *What* Balaam *the Son of* Beor, *anſwered him.*

And this Anſwer, that *Balaam* returns to *Balak*, contains God's gracious Deliverance of his People from *Balak*'s malicious, and wicked intendment. And it is an Anſwer, not as *Balak* wiſhed, nor yet as *Balaam* would have made; but the Anſwer is Prophetical,

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I. Here is a ſtrict Prohibition.

II. Here is a gracious Inverſion.

III. Here is a juſt Retorſion.

I. This Anſwer conſiſts in a ſtrict, and abſolute, and peremptory Prohibition: *Curſe them not; there is no Inchantment againſt* Jacob, *neither is there any divination againſt* Iſrael. *How ſhall I curſe, whom God hath not curſed? How ſhall I defie whom the Lord hath not defied?* Here have been great preparations, and ſolicitations, Altars, and Oblations, and all, that Malice and Miſchief can deviſe: but, when all is done, here comes a Prohibition from Heaven. *Rex non vult progredi*; that comes in, and ſtops the proceedings. 'Twas ſo with us as on this day. The Vault digg'd, and full fraught with Gunpowder, Altars built, and Maſſes ſaid to proſper the work; I, and the Match kindled too, our Neck was upon the block, there was but a ſtep betwixt us and death: and then comes *David's Nè perdas* from Heaven; *See thou do it not, deſtroy them not.* Our Traytors were digging deep; but here's a ſudden damp ariſeth in the Mine, it wets their Powder, and quenches their Fire-works. There was a Watcher, and an Holy One, came down from Heaven, daſhed all preſently. Thus God quenched thoſe two ſmoaking Fire-brands, *Eſay* vii. 7. *It ſhall not be, neither ſhall it come to paſs. Curſe them not.* Why? He might have ſuffered them to curſe, and yet *Balak*, and *Balaam* had been never the near. *As the Bird by wandring, and the Swallow by flying; ſo the curſe cauſleſs ſhall not come:* Prov. xxvi. 2. True; but yet God will bridle the mouths of wicked men; they ſhall not be able to do, nay, not to ſpeak evil againſt his Church. *See thou ſpeak nothing but good to* Jacob, ſaith God to *Laban*. Let *Laban* come with all his Train one way, and *Eſau* with his four hundred at his heels another way, both to aſſault *Jacob*, God doth not only manicle their hands; but muzzles their mouths too, they ſhall not utter a bad word to him. That's the Firſt; the Anſwer is a peremptory Prohibition, *Prov.* xvi. 1. B C D

II. This Anſwer hath more in it; here is a gracious Inverſion. *Balaam* ſhall not Curſe; that's not all, he ſhall be made to pronounce a Bleſſing upon them. Here is the Croſſing of the hands indeed. *I ſent for thee to curſe mine enemies*, ſaith *Balak* to *Balaam*; *and lo, thou haſt bleſſed them altogether. Moſes* reminds them of this gracious Inverſion, *Deut.* xxiii. 5. *The* LORD, *thy God, would not hearken unto* Balaam: *but the* LORD, *thy God, turned the curſe into a bleſſing unto thee, becauſe the* LORD, *thy God, loved thee.* See how God inſpired *Balaam*, made him an Inſtrument of bleſſing his People. How many magnificent Prophecies did he make him to utter, of *Iſrael's* proſperity? He foretells the Kingdom of *David*, nay of *Chriſt* himſelf. He pours out *pluviam Benedictionum*, he ſhowrs down Benedictions, and Bleſſings on the Lord's Inheritance. Still we ſee the malignity of the Churches enemies is a Motive to God, to multiply favours, and mercies upon E

A upon them. *Let them curse, but bless thou*; saith *David*, Psal. cix. 28. Nay, because they would curse, therefore God blesses. Thus *David* comforted himself, when *Shimei* curs'd him. *It may be the* LORD *will look upon mine afflictions, and that the* LORD *will requite good for his cursing this day*; 2 Sam. xvi. 12. *The* LORD *thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and upon them that hate thee, which persecuted thee*, Deut. xxx. 7. Thus dealt he with his People in *Egypt*; the more *Pharaoh* havocked them, the more God multiplyed, and increased them, and made them stronger than their enemies; *in the things wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them*, Exod. xviii. 11. *David*
B takes notice of this way of God's working, in taking these advantages of the Churches enemies. *Surely* (saith he) *the wrath, and fury of man shall turn to thy praise, and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain*, Psal. lxxvi. 10. Here is another Moral of *Sampson*'s Riddle, *Out of the eater came meat, Out of the strong came sweetness:* Out of the mouth of a cursing Enemy, God hath ordained a Blessing, that *he might still the enemy and the avenger.* We may take up *Joseph*'s Speech to his malicious Brethren, that sought his ruin; *Vos cogitâstis malum*; *Deus autem vertit in bonum.* They meant to mischief us, and God overrules it to the magnifying of his Mercy on us.

C III. Here is yet more in this Answer of *Balaam*; here is a just Retorsion. The Curse, that *Balak* would have brought upon *Israel*, 'tis fallen upon himself, and his own People. God over-rules the mouth of *Balaam* to foretell the ruin of *Moab*, which sought to ruin the People of God. Hear what *Balaam* doth propheſie against them: *There shall come a Star out of* Jacob, *and a Scepter shall arise out of* Israel, *and shall smite the corners of* Moab, *and destroy all the Children of* Sheth; *Numb.* xxiv. 17. Nay, his Prophecy comes nearer to us. Expositours observe, he foretells the ruin of *Rome*, *That also shall perish for ever*; Verse 24. I; here is the Triumph of God's Mercy
D to his Church: they, that would ruin it, shall ruin themselves. *Whosoever shall fall on this Stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder*, Math. xxi. 44. *His mischief* (saith *David*) *shall come down upon his own pate*, Psal. vii. 16. *David*'s Prayers have prevailed for us too, *Psal.* cxli. 10. *Let the wicked fall into their own nets; whilest that I withall escape. As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be farr from him*, Psal. cix. 17.

Come we to the

Third Particular; the End and Purpose of this gracious Deliverance,
E *That ye may understand the righteousness of the* LORD.

I. Not our own righteousness; 'twas not that, that enclined God to deliver them. *Moses*, enters a *Caveat* against any such conceit, Deut. ix. 4. *Speak not in thine heart, 'Tis for my righteousness, that God hath done it.* Never speak it, never think it; we have been an unrighteous People; we may take up *Daniel*'s Confession, *O* LORD, *righteousness belongs unto thee, but unto us shame, and confusion, as at this day:*

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day: And *Ezra*'s acknowledgment, *O LORD God of* Israel, *thou art righteous; for we remain yet escaped as it is this day: Behold, we are before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee, because of them,* Ezra ix. 15. 'Tis not our righteousness. A

II. 'Tis the *LORD*'s *righteousness* which works the deliverance. Why not his Mercy? as *Jeremy* pitch'd upon that; *'Tis the tender mercies of the LORD, that*— 'Tis so; but this adds a new strength to his Mercies. Mercies promised, and assured to his Church, the performance of those is faithfulness, and righteousness. His dealings with his Church are founded in mercy, but performed in righteousness. He sends deliverances to others; but they, *puræ misericordiæ*, not only undesired, but unpromised mercies; but his Church hath his Word and Promise. Thus *David, Look unto the Covenant; for*---Mark that Covenant, which wrought this deliverance, Gen. xii. 3. *I will bless them, that bless thee; and curse them, that curse thee.* B

III. *That we may understand it.* Not only believe it; but understand it, gain the experience of it. Consider it, acknowledge it, feel the comfort, and sweetness of it. Such Deliverances as these, they should beget a good understanding 'twixt God and us. We should learn to know him the better, while we live. Shall other Nations take notice of our Deliverances, and shall not we our selves? As *David*, in Psalm cxxvi. *When the LORD turned again— they said among the Heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them:* shall they understand it, and wonder at it, and shall not we understand, and acknowledge, and say, *The LORD hath done great things for us already, wherefore we are glad? As we have heard, so we have seen in the City of our God.* C

IV. That we may understand the righteousness of that holy Religion; which he hath honoured with such a deliverance. 'Twas our Religion that was struck at in this Treason; that God sheltered, and gave testimony to. Oh! let's stick to it. *O, I will love thy Testimonies*; for, with them, and for them thou hast answered me, and saved us alive. D

V. That we may understand the unrighteousness of that Religion, that teaches, and practises these hellish Villanies. For this horrid Treason, it was not only plotted by *Papists*, (but yet upon other Motives, and Grounds, and for other Ends) but it was taught by *Popery*, and undertaken for *Popery*, to set up that again in this Kingdom. When they tell us they act according to Principles, we must look upon this Treason, as the natural Issue of that Religion, and accordingly abhor both Breed and Dam; their Treason, and their Religion, by which it was taught, and for which it was undertaken. E

For, as there are in our Christian Religion, besides the Sacred Mysteries, and Sanctity of it, many Evidences of Honesty, and Innocency, which make it lovely, even to a reasonable sober man, though not enlightened with supernatural Grace; As that it forbids all Vice, commands all Vertue, it strictly requires obedience to Magistrates, love, and charity, patience, and humility, *Tit.* iii. 1. it puts us in minde

A minde *to be ſubject to Principalities, and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates, to ſpeak evil of no man, to be ready to every good work*: So contrariwiſe, in *Popery*, beſides the Hereſies, Idolatries, Superſtitions, which it teaches, diſcernable by a Chriſtian, beſides theſe, there are ſomé unnatural Impieties, and wicked practiſes of that Religion, which render it a deteſtable Religion, even to any underſtanding man; As,

1. Their unſatiable Ambition after Dominion, and Supremacy, over all Churches, and Kingdoms: and that the Pope ſhould be an univerſal Monarch; Emperours, and Kings ſubject to his controul: That B *Peter*'s Fiſher-boat ſhould become a man of War, and ſcour the main Ocean, and, his Succeſſour, the Pope turn Pirate; as 'tis ſaid of *Pope Julius* the Second, that *à remulco ad Pontificatum aſcendit*, from a poor Water-man, that tugg'd at an Oar, he became Pope, and Univerſal Biſhop, and Lorded it in the world.

2. Their Equivocation, and Art of Lying, and Forſwearing. A myſtery taught by the *Jeſuits*; a Practice moſt oppoſite to humane ſociety, that a man may ſay, and ſwear the quite contrary to that, which he knows to be true.

3. Their Diſpenſations with lawfull Oaths; that, when Subjects, C have ſworn their faithfull Allegiance to their Kings, to defend them againſt all oppoſition, and hoſtility, yet they teach, that the Pope may diſannull this Oath, and diſpenſe with Subjects to rebell againſt their Princes, and to take up Arms againſt them.

4. Their plotting of Treaſons, and murthering of Princes, accounting it not only lawfull, but meritorious, and thank-worthy with God to deſtroy Princes, and Common-wealths, and to raiſe Seditions, and Tumults at the Pope's beck. Surely, were there nothing but this in Popery to be condemned, the ſcandal it caſts upon Chriſtianity, the horrid Villanies it hath cauſed in the Chriſtian World, would make D it abominable. Surely, that Religion, that loves to lap blood, and feed upon the fleſh of Kings, and Princes, and raiſes up it ſelf by the ruins of Kingdoms, that Religion is not of God. 'Tis far from that Religion, which our meek, and mercifull Saviour hath taught, and eſtabliſhed; moſt contrary to the Kingdom and patience of *Jeſus Chriſt*, which Saint *John* ſpeaks of, *Rev.* i. 9. Saint *Auguſtine* proclaims it to all the world in the Name of Chriſt, *Audite*, Judæi; *audite*, Gentes; (Let *Jews* and *Gentiles* hear, let *Circumciſion*, and *Uncircumciſion* hear, let *all the Kingdoms of the Earth hear*) *Non impedio veſtram dominationem in mundo.* Chriſtian Religion is far from diE ſturbing, or embroyling Kingdoms with Warrs and Seditions. Let it be the ſhame, and infamy of *Rome*; and let us ever abhor it, and their Religion for it.

FIVE

FIVE

SERMONS

PREACHED

ON

Chriſtmaſs-Day.

ON CHRISTMASS-DAY,

The First Sermon.

HAGGAI ii. 7.

I will ſhake all Nations, and the deſire of all Nations ſhall come, and I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the LORD *of Hoſts.*

THE Text, 'tis a Prophecy, and prediction of our Saviours Incarnation, and coming into the World; a Sacred Truth, requiring not only the aſſent, but the obedience, yea the devotion, and adoration of our Faith. When God was to bring his firſt-begotten into the World, theſe Prophecies Uſhered him in, and proclaimed before him, as *Pharaoh* before *Joſeph*, *ABRECH, Bow the Knee. Let all the Angels of God worſhip him, let every knee bow down before him, let every Tongue confeſs him*, let every Soul receive, and embrace him.

'Tis true, the incredulous, unbelieving *Jews* labour to obſcure, and deface this, and all other Prophecies of Chriſt, and, by miſconſtruction, to draw them away to another ſenſe. They anſwer all the Prophets in their predictions of Chriſt, as *Eſai* complains of them, *Ch.* xxx. 10. *They ſay to the Seers, See not; and to the Prophets, Prophecie not unto us right things: but Prophecie to us deceits.* What *Joſeph* did ignorantly ſuſpect, theſe blaſphemouſly aver, that the fruit of the Virgin's Womb was ſome adulterous Brood, not the bleſſed Conception by the Holy Ghoſt. When ever they meet with theſe promiſes of Chriſt, they are troubled, as *Herod* was, and the City of *Jeruſalem*, at the tidings of his Birth. The Devil, that ſame *Magnus Herodes*, as *Theodoret* calls him, he aſſembles a Councel of *Jewiſh Prieſts*, to pervert,

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vert, and elude theſe ſacred Oracles. They ſeek to deſtroy Chriſt, not only, as *Herod*, in the Cradle; but, by perverting theſe Scriptures, to make an abortive conception of him. Theſe Promiſes are the ſeed, by which he was conceived; deſtroy that precious ſeed of the Holy Ghoſt, and the Faith of the Church ſhall *conceive the winde, and bring forth a vanity, and travel with a ly.* A

The *Jews*, they pervert the Text; and ſome other Expoſitours miſtake it, and draw down the height, and myſterie of this Prophecy to an inferiour ſenſe. *Montanus* (that comes neareſt of them, that fall ſhort) conceives it a *Promiſe of the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt.* Indeed, the coming of that is ſometimes foretold; but yet the main Scope of the Prophets was to foretel Chriſt. *Chriſtus eſt ſignaculum omnium Prophetiarum*, ſaith *Tertullian.* To him give all the Prophets witneſs. Chriſt, ſaith *Chryſoſtome*, was πλήρωμα νόμου· the Holy Ghoſt was πλήρωμα εὐαγγελίου. The Father firſt promiſed the Son; after the Son he promiſed the Holy Ghoſt. He, that is here promiſed, muſt rule over the Nations, become an Head, and deliverer to his Church. Now *Chriſtus* is *Caput*, *Spiritus Sanctus* is *Cor Eccleſiæ*, ſaith *Thomas Aquinas.* B

But generally the moſt antient, and Orthodox Interpreters, do faſten their Meditations upon the Text, as a clear, and undoubted Prediction of the Meſſias his coming, the manifeſtation of the great God, and his appearance in the World. C

And this ſenſe we embrace; and ſo apprehend the Text, as a Prophetical prediction of that great benefit, and myſterie of our Religion, that the Chriſtian Church doth this day celebrate.

And 'tis of great uſe to look back to theſe Prophecies, even after their fulfilling. As the Angel ſpake to the Women at the Sepulchre, to confirm them in the Faith of Chriſt's Reſurrection, *See the place, where the LORD was laid*; the emptineſs of the Grave proved he was riſen: ſo even after Chriſt is born, and actually exhibited, 'tis of uſe to our Faith, to ſearch, and review theſe Prophecies; the fulfilling of theſe places will greatly confirm our Faith of his Incarnation. As in your Purchaſes, and Poſſeſſions, though you be ſeized, and ſtated in them, ye deſire to get in all antient Evidences, and former Conveyances to ſtrengthen your Tenure: ſo, though now we be poſſeſſed of Chriſt, yet theſe Prophecies are our fore-Fathers Records; we claim theſe Teſtimonies as our Inheritance, our Faith holds by them. D

The Hiſtory of the Goſpel, that's matter of great joy, to hear he is born: but the Prophecies of the Law are great confirmations, to ſee his coming ſo clearly foretold. It makes us know, that this was no chance-birth; but conceived in the womb of eternity. What was true of *David*, is, in this ſenſe, moſt true of Chriſt, *In thy Book were all my Members written*; all the paſſages, and circumſtances of this holy Nativity. Old *Zachary* tells us, all the Prophets, ſince the world began, did joyntly foretel it. The firſt Promiſe to *Adam*, that was the firſt conception; theſe after Prophecies are the articulation, the quickning of E

A of the Childe in the Mother's womb. The joy of the Goſpel, that's *Simeon*'s joy, *exultatio in brachiis*, the Church now holds Chriſt in her arms; but the joy of theſe Prophecies, 'tis like *Elizabeth*'s joy, *exultatio in utero*; at the voyce of theſe Prophecies the *Babe ſprings in the womb.* The Faith of the Prophets was *Fides concipiens*; the Faith of the Goſpel, 'tis *fides pariens*, the belief of his Birth', and preſent Nativity.

To reflect upon theſe Prophecies, and to finde them made good, eſtabliſhes our Belief in all other Truths. *Impleta credimus, impleri videmus, implenda confidimus.* Saint *Auguſtine* makes it the pro-
B greſs, and improvement of Faith upon theſe performances. It will put *David*'s Song into our mouth: *As we have heard, ſo have we ſeen:* heard it foretold, ſeen it fulfilled. We may ſing with the Pſalmiſt, *All the ways of the LORD are mercy, and Truth:* Mercy in promiſing; Truth in performing. We may confeſs, with *Solomon*, *Bleſſed be the LORD, who ſpake it with his mouth, and hath with his hand fulfilled it.* We may open our Text, as Chriſt did, *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.* Our Faith may ſafely ſets to its Seal, that *God is true.*

The Text then ye ſee, 'tis the Prophet *Haggai*'s Prediction of our
C Saviour's Incarnation. And of it let us take a double view, make two Enquiries:

Firſt, *Quæ occaſio?* what occaſions the Prophet now to mention our Saviour, and foretel his Nativity?

Secondly, *Quæ conditio?* what's the nature, and condition, and ſubſtance of the Prophecy?

Firſt, *Quæ occaſio?* what makes the Prophet ſpeak of Chriſt's birth, and Incarnation? how is it ſeaſonable, and ſuitable to his preſent Diſcourſe? Yes, very well: the mentioning, and foretelling of Chriſt's Incarnation comes in without any ſtraining, or impertinent digreſſion.
D The Prophet finds the People in a very low, and deſerted condition, weeping to ſee the miſerable decayes, and the poor repairs of their City, and Temple; all their State was at a very low ebb. Indeed now the Tide was turning, they were come out of Captivity; but yet things went ſo hard with them, ſuch poor beginnings of their Church and State, the Nations about them all maligning, deriding, and hindering that work; that the Prophet ſets himſelf to comfort, and encourage them. And the main conſolation he miniſters to them is this gracious aſſurance, that the Meſſias was ere long to be born, and to come among them.

E Such times as theſe have been the ſeaſon, that God hath obſerved in promiſing of Chriſt. When his Church, and People have been in affliction; (ſtill we may obſerve it) when the People of God were at the greateſt loſs, and perplexity: then the promiſe of Chriſt was renewed, and clearly publiſhed. In King *Ahaz* his Time, the *Syrians* made a dreadful War upon *Judah*, the Houſe of *David*, all their hearts trembled at it: God ſends *Eſai* to comfort them; and with

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with what Tidings, but with the promise of Christ? Esai. vii. 14. *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a Son.* So again, *Chap.* ix the Prophet describes some great affliction lying heavy on the Land, Dimness, and darkness, and much tribulation; he revives their Spirits with this blessed assurance, *Verse* 7. *Unto us a Childe is born, unto us a Son is given.* The *Babylonish* Captivity, that was a sad, and sorrowful time, and the cruelty of *Antiochus*, that havock'd the Church; *Daniel* felt the one, foresaw the other. The Kingdom of the Messias was then the Promise, that did support them. *I saw one like the Son of Man, and unto him was given Dominion and Glory.* And now, here, God's People are in a sad condition, the Prophet raises up their hearts with this blessed expectation, Christ shall be born to them.

And this Promise of Christ had a threefold Virtue in it, that made it most seasonable in the time of Distress.

First, It sweetned their sorrow in their present Affliction.

Secondly, It revived their hope of a future restauration.

Thirdly, It set back their fear of final destruction.

First, This blessed Promise was able to sweeten their present Affliction, that, though they were in a low condition, yet Christ belonged to them, and they to Christ. The promise of Christ hath a power of comforting in the greatest sadness. *Herein ye greatly rejoyce, though ye be in heavinesse, through many afflictions:* 1 Pet. i. 6. What? though they have nothing, but the *bread of adversity*, and the *water of affliction?* Yet their *eyes shall see their Saviour.* Indeed the Times of sorrow are the seasonablest times for Christ to present himself to his Church. His coming, 'tis called *a visitation*, Luke i. 78. And that supposes a state of sorrow, and distress: Not a visitation of courtesie; but of comfort. He visits us, not as a friend only; but as a Physician to help, and relieve us. He is called a *consolation*; *The consolation of* Israel, *Luke* vi. 25. Not only *gaudium* but *consolatio*; that's joy upon sorrow, the most welcome joy. *Consolatio non est nisi miserorum, non est nisi gementium, & lugentium*; Aug. All, that were in distress, and in debt; all, whose souls were in bitterness, had recourse to *David*, and he became Captain to them. *Quando multiplicantur lateres, venit* Moses. When the yoke of their Burthen, and the staff of their Shoulder, and the Rod of their oppressour, was heavyest upon them; then comes Christ to them: *Esai.* ix. *iv.* That's the reason, saith *Nazianzen*, why Christ was born when the *Jews* were taxed by *Augustus Cæsar*; ἵνα ἡμυθίσηται τῆς δουλείας ἡμᾶς, to sweeten their Captivity. He is the true *Noah* of his Church. He shall comfort them concerning their labour, and toyl of their hands.

This present poverty of the *Jews* was abundantly supplyed by this precious promise; they were poor in possession, but rich in reversion; they had τὴν ἐν ἐπαγγελίαις ἀποκειμένην μακαριότητα, as St. *Basil* speaks, Plenty and Happiness, stored up in Promises. He is no poor man, that hath rich men for his debtors, though destitute of money: that hath bonds, and specialities, and good debts in abundance. The Promise

A Promiſe of Chriſt, and the hope of Heaven, 'tis the Churches Riches; this aſſurance will make them bear up in the ſaddeſt condition.

Secondly, This Promiſe of Chriſt, 'tis now exceeding ſeaſonable, it revived their hope of a full Reſtauration. 'Tis the Fundamental promiſe that gives ſtrength and aſſurance to all other Promiſes. Freedom from miſeries, temporal deliverances, the welfare of God's People, all theſe Promiſes have their force and ſtability from this grand Promiſe, that *Chriſt ſhall be ours*. From the root of *David* ſpring all theſe ſecondary, and temporary Promiſes; they are μεσφυάδες, Sprouts and Branches of that Tree of Life.

B It prevents, and removes all doubts and ſuſpicions, that their fear may forecaſt againſt their deliverance. Shall their Temple be built again out of ſo great ruines? *LORD, wilt thou reſtore again the Kingdom to* Iſrael? There may be two Doubts of it:

I. *An poſſit?*

II. *An velit?* And this Promiſe of Chriſt ſatisfies both of them.

I. *An poſſit?* They doubted much of that. *Can theſe dead Bones live?* ſaith *Ezekiel*; that is, *Can the ruins of* Zion *be made up again?* Yes; God is a working a greater work, than that comes to, his Son ſhall be incarnate, *a Virgin ſhall conceive and bring forth* C *a Son*. Believe this; and you cannot doubt of the other. Sure; he, that can effect this, can *ſuſcitare Virginem* Sionis *poſt ruinam*, reſtore the Daughter of *Sion* out of her Captivity. To make a *Virgin bring forth*, 'tis νόμων φύσεως κατάλυσις, ſaith *Nazianzene*, it works a change in the courſe of Nature. How can we queſtion his more eaſie Promiſes? Indeed the belief of this Article makes all other Truths more eaſily credible. The raiſing of a dead man to life, 'tis a work will poſe any natural underſtanding; but believe Chriſts Incarnation, we ſhall preſently yield to the poſſibility, and Truth of a Reſurrection. Chriſt examines *Martha*, John xi. 25, 26. *He, that believes in me, though he were* D *dead, yet ſhall he live; believeſt thou this*, Martha? Obſerve the Anſwer ſhe returns to him, *Verſe* 27. *Yea, LORD, I believe, that thou art the* Chriſt *that ſhould come into the World*. Her anſwer may ſeem impertinent. He queſtions her about the Reſurrection, ſhe profeſſes her Faith in his Incarnation. No, ſhe ſpeaks like a right Believer: yield thy Faith to that great work of his Birth, and Incarnation; thou wilt never ſhrink from the hardeſt Truths, and moſt improbable; as this was one, a dead man's Reſurrection.

But then there is another Doubt,

E II. *An velit?* Will God be thus good to us? Yes; the Incarnation of his Son, as 'tis an argument of his Power; ſo 'tis the greateſt evidence, and proof of his Love. *In him all other Promiſes are Yea, and Amen*. He, that will part with his Son for us, *how ſhall not he with him give us all things alſo?* Rom. viii. 33. The Propoſition, 'tis not convertible; He may give us other things, but deny us his Son: but this Conſequence is undeniable: *If his Son be ours, all other things ſhall be ours alſo. The Woman ſhall be ſaved,* διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας. The *Nicene*

Councel

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Councel underſtands it of this Day's Birth, as the pledge of their Salvation. *Manoah*'s Wife pleads well for her own, and her Husbands ſafety; *If the* LORD *would deſtroy us, he would never have ſhewed us theſe things*, promiſed us a Childe, that ſhould deliver *Iſrael* from the hand of the *Philiſtins*, Judg. xiii. 23. What God ſaid to *Abraham*, we may ſay to God: *Now we know that thou loveſt us, ſeeing thou haſt not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from us.* *Ezekiel* aſſures them, *Jeruſalem* ſhall be built again from this bleſſed Expectation; *The Name of the City, from that day, ſhall be* Jehovah-Shammah, *The* LORD *is there.* A

Thirdly, This Promiſe of Chriſt is now proper and pertinent; it ſets back their fear of a final deſtruction. Their City ſhall be built again, and their Temple reſtored, and the Houſe of *David* have a new eſtabliſhment; for, from that Linage muſt the *Meſſiah* deſcend; till that Promiſe be performed, no fear of deſolation. *Of* Zion *it ſhall be ſaid, He ſhall be born in her, and the moſt High ſhall ſtabliſh her*; Pſal. lxxxvii. 5. A condemned Woman, conceived with Childe, is reprieved by the Law, till the Childe be born of her, and then afterwards executed. *Jeruſalem*, though, by God's juſt Sentence, devoted to deſtruction, it was under bail and reprievement, till this promiſed Seed was born, and exhibited. This Promiſe ſecures them of it. *This ſhall be a ſign to you*, ſaith God to *Moſes*; *In this Mount ye ſhall worſhip me.* In this Temple ſhall the *Meſſiah* be preſented, his *glory* ſhall appear in it, it ſhall therefore be built again. B C

'Twas a great aſſurance God gave to *Jeremy* of their return from *Babylon*, that he directs the Prophet to purchaſe lands at *Anathoth*, when the City was beſieged; *Fields ſhall be bought in this Land again, when ye return from* Babylon. God ſeals here a Bond to his People, and the payment muſt be tendred, and made in the Temple. Chriſt muſt appear there; therefore the Temple ſhall be reſtored. Chriſt's coming in the *Fleſh*, was the τὸ κατέχον, of the *Jews* deſtruction. That day ſhall not come, till *the myſtery of Godlineſs be revealed.* The Son of God, he muſt ſit in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God indeed: till that be accompliſhed, they were ſure of continuance. D

That's the Firſt enquiry, *Quæ occaſio?* What gave occaſion to mention this Promiſe? Come we to the

Second enquiry: that's *Quæ conditio?* What's the nature, and condition, and ſubſtance of this Promiſe? And for that, conceive the words as a lively deſcription of our Saviour's coming. And it ſtands upon theſe particulars;

Firſt, Here is a ſolemn preparation to it: *I will ſhake all Nations.*

Secondly, Here is a gracious performance of it: *The Deſire of all Nations ſhall come.* E

Thirdly, Here is a glorious effect, that ſhall accompany, and attend it: *I will fill this houſe with Glory.*

Fourthly, Here is a ſtrong, and a full aſſurance of it: *Saith the* LORD *of Hoſts.*

Firſt, Here is a ſolemn preparation to it: that's a ſhaking, and concuſſion

A cuſſion of all Nations. His coming ſhall be with obſervation. Nay, not only *all Nations*; but all Creatures ſhall feel this commotion: *I will ſhake heaven, and earth, ſaith the* LORD; Ver. vi. The whole frame of the Creation ſhall be ſenſible of it. The Goſpel of Chriſt ſhall be publiſhed with as great aw, and ſolemnity, as ever the Law was. Then the earth trembled, and quaked, Mount *Sinai* was ſhaken; and ſo God promiſes he will work wonders in heaven, and earth, to make Chriſt's coming obſervable: *Tremble thou earth at the preſence of God.* When Chriſt was brought forth, there was *nixus totius Naturæ. The Heavens dropt down from above, and the Skies did pour down rigbteouſneſs; the*
B *Earth did open to bring forth Salvation; and righteouſneſs ſprung up together*, ſaith the Prophet *Eſai. Truth did bud out of the earth; and the earth wondred* at it,

Miratura novum fructum, & non ſua poma.

But, more eſpecially, here is the ſtirring of *all Nations* foretold: *The Inhabitants of the earth ſhall be moved, and ſhaken.* What's the purpoſe of that? what doth the Prophet intend in this Prediction? Surely there were *divers ſhakings of the Nations* to make way for Chriſts coming, ſeveral commotions. Reduce them all to theſe particulars.

C 1. The firſt is *concuſſio pertubationis.* Before Chriſt's coming, there was to be amongſt the Nations great ſtirs, and commotions. The Times before Chriſt, they were troubleſom Times; the World was imbroiled with tumults and uproars; Nation daſhing againſt Nation, and all ſubdued by the *Roman* Empire. *Omnia regna comminuta, & conflata in* Romani *Imperii ſumman*, ſaith the Father: that put a yoke of ſervitude upon all other people.

1. That's a ſeaſon for Chriſt to be born in: when the world is in an uproar; then 'tis moſt fit for the *Prince of Peace* to manifeſt himſelf. Thus *David* brings him in quieting the Nations, *Pſal.* xlvi. 9,
D 10. *He will make wars to ceaſe unto the end of the Earth; Be ſtill, and know I am God, I will be exalted amongſt the Heathen.*

2. Then 'twas moſt ſeaſonable for Chriſt to come; when his enemies were at the higheſt: it beſt befitted him then to ſet up his Kingdom. When the *Romans* had ſubdued all; then Chriſt ſets up his Throne, makes theirs but his Foot-ſtool. His coming was no ſurpriſal, when they were in their weakneſs (as the ſlaughter of the *Sichemites* by *Simeon*, and *Levi*, *when the People were ſore*) but a glorious Victory over the greateſt ſtrength. *Daniel* foreſaw it; he *ſaw the Stone cut out without hands, that ſmote the Kingdoms of the earth, and brake them in*
E *pieces. Who art thou, O great Mountain, before* Zerubbabel? *it ſhall be made plain.* Chriſt is the tue *Zerubbabel*, the fanner of *Babel:* the Nations are but as chaffe before him.

3. Then 'twas fit for Chriſt to come; when his Church was at the loweſt. The greateſt commotions ſhall bring the greateſt good to the Church of God. The iſſue will be happy to the Church, it will bring forth a Saviour. Chriſt compares the troubles of his Church,

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to the pangs of a woman in her travel; it ſhall end in joy; a Man-child ſhall be born for the Churches deliverance. Thus the Church comforts her ſelf in the greateſt extremities, Pſal. xlvi. 2. *We will not fear, though the Earth be removed, though the Mountains ſhake, God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not be moved.* In the greateſt Tempeſts that can ariſe, his Providence guides, and ſteers his Church with a ſteddy hand. *Sicut Gubernator nunquam manum ſuum à gubernaculo, ſic nunquam curam ſuam Deus tollit à mundo*, ſaith *Salvian*. A

1. In all quarrels, and contentions about Truth, the Church is the Gainer: they ſtir up more diligent enquiries, bring forth more judicious Reſolutions. *Ut quod antea ſimpliciter credebatur, hoc idem poſtea diligentiùs crederetur; quod antea lentiùs prædicabatur, hoc idem poſtea inſtantius prædicaretur; quod antea ſecuriùs colebatur, hoc idem ſolicitiùs excoleretur*, ſaith *Lyrinenſis*. Hereſies are but the File, and Furnace of Truth, make it ſhine more clearly. Vehement ſhakings make the deeper rooting. We have no Truths ſo ſetled as thoſe that have been moſt violently oppoſed. B

2. In tumults, and perſecutions, the Church ſhall have a moſt glorious iſſue. When the Devil rages moſt, his time is ſhorteſt, and Chriſt's time is neareſt. The Churches enemies may have ſome petty ſucceſſes; but not wholly prevail. *Vincunt in prælio; ſed non in bello. This is your hour, and the power of darkneſs*, ſaith Chriſt: the hour may be theirs, but the day ſhall be ours. *Goliah* may brave it for a time; but, when *David* comes down, and enters the liſts, the *Philiſtines* ſhall flee. For a time the Church may go by the worſe; but 'tis but the retreat of our General, 'tis not his Flight: He ſhall return victoriouſly, and ſet his feet on the necks of his Enemies. When the War is ended, then view the field, count the dead bodies. The ſucceſs of *Iſrael* againſt *Midian*, (Numb. xxxi. 1.) ſhall betide the Church; not one *Iſraelite* loſt, not one *Midianite* ſaved. *The God of peace ſhall tread down Satan under our feet.* He ſhall tread him down, and yet under our feet: the Victory ſhall be his, and the Triumph ours. C

That's the firſt Shaking, *Concuſſio Perturbationis.*

II. This *ſhaking of all Nations*, 'tis *Concuſſio excitationis*; a Stirring up the Nations to the Expectation, and looking for of the Meſſiah. God purpoſely foretold, and forelaid many Signs, and Tokens; in the Accompliſhment of which, they might conclude Chriſt's Birth was approaching.

The *Jews*, they were furniſhed with their Prognoſticks. All their Prophecies pointed at him; all, like Lines, met in this Center. *Chriſto prædicendo omnes Prophetarum paginæ invigilant*; ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. He is the Title of every Book, and every Page bears this Inſcription; *Salutem in Chriſto. In the Volume of thy Book it was written of me.* What Place is there meant, ſay the Expoſitours? They conclude, the Pſalmiſt meant no one Text; but that the whole Volume of Scripture did propheſie of Him. He was the Sum, and Scope of all D E

A all their Predictions. He was *Adam's promiseed Seed, Abraham's Isaac, Jacob's Shiloh, Moses* his *great Prophet, Esay's Immanuel, Jeremy's Man compassed by a Woman, Ezekiel's Shepheard, Daniel's Holy One, Zachary's Branch, Malachy's Angel:* All of them Predictions to foretel his Coming.

All their Types, and Ceremonies pointed at Him. He was *Abel's Sacrifice, Noah's Dove, Abraham's First-fruits, Isaac's Ram, Jacob's Ladder, Moses* his *Pass-over, Aaron's Rod,* the *Israelites Rock,* the *Patriarchs Mannah, David's Tabernacle, Solomon's Temple:* All of these prefigured His Incarnation. They were *Fasciæ infantis Jesu*; all as
B Folds, and Swathling-Bands of this Babe Jesus.

All their Kings, Figures of this great King, and Prince of our Salvation. All their Judges, and Deliverers, Types of this great Saviour. All their Priests, Ushers to bring in this High-Priest of our Profession. All the Mysteries in Scripture, forewarned them of this Mystery.

Nay the very Heathens were not destitute of these Forewarnings.

1. *Balaam's* Prophecy, St. *Augustine* conceives, was kept upon Record even among the *Gentiles. There shall come a Star out of* Jacob. That helped the Observation of the Wise-men from the East; *Where is he, that is born King of the* Jews? The appearance of that Prophe-
C tical Star, awakened their Expectation. The *Manichees* reject that Story of the Star; as if Christ's Birth had been governed by a Constellation. No, saith St. *Augustine*; *Stella famulabatur Testimonio; non dominabatur imperio.. Christus fuit fatum; Stella non Stella Christi:* it was a ministring Star, it did not over-rule His Birth, it served to foretel Him.

2. The shaking of Heaven, and Earth, and declining of the Sun, in *Salinus* his Time, was observed, and wondered at by the *Gentiles. Tertullian* remindes the *Romans* of it, tells them they had it in *Archivis*, kept a Record of it.

D 3. The Prophecies of the *Sybils*. St. *Augustine* puts a great Difference 'twixt them and the *Jewish* Prophecies. *Quantum distat de Christi adventu inter prædicationem Angelorum, & confessionem Dæmonum?* But yet they were no Forgeries of Christians: the Heathen owned them, could not gain-say them.

4. Miracles among the *Jews*, stirr'd up the world to this great Expectation. *Virgo concipit, sterilis parit, mutus loquitur, utero clausus exultat*; all matters of Wonderment. St. *Ambrose* puts them together, as Attendants of his Incarnation. Many Prodigies among the Heathen, mentioned by their own Authors, and enforced by ours, (a
E Babe in the Womb, crying *Io triumphe*!) put them all to Amazement, made them conceive some strange Discovery of God should be made amongst them, and to cry out in Astonishment, with their Prophet *Balaam, What will God work?*

III. This shaking of the Nations, 'tis *Concussio magnæ mutationis:* it foretels a shaking of all things into a great Alteration. Christ, at his Coming, and by his Gospel, shall cause a great Alteration, and

Sermon I.

Change in the World. As a powerful Conquerour alters the former Face, and Faſhion of Government, ſets up, and eſtabliſhes new Laws, and Cuſtoms: ſo Chriſt, at His entring upon His Government, ſhall caſt all into a new Form. Hence it is, that the time of the Meſſias is called a *new Creation: Old things are paſſed; behold, all things are become new.* The Apoſtle calls the time of the Goſpel, a *New World*, *Heb.* ii. 5. The *Jews* call it the *World of the* Meſſiah. *Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth; the former ſhall not be remembred*, ſaith the Prophet *Eſai*, when he ſaw his Glory, and ſpake of Him. A

Take it in three Particulars. The Coming of Chriſt wrought a great Change, B

1. *In ſtatu rerum.*
2. *In moribus hominum.*
3. *In modo rituum.*

1. *In ſtatu rerum.* The whole World received a great Alteration, not in their Polity, and civil Government; *Herod* was afraid, where no Fear was. Chriſt comes not to overthow, but to eſtabliſh Governments. The Goſpel diſſolves not; but faſtens, and ſtrengthens the Bonds of Obedience. Seditious, and rebellious men make the *Jews* choice, diſclaim *Chriſt*, and lay claim to *Barabbas*, a *mover of Sedition*, a *maker of Inſurrection:* No; *Crucifigatur* Barabbas, *& vivat* Jeſus: Let *Chriſt* live, and let *Barabbas* be crucified. Government, and Authority, 'tis not impaired, but improved by Religion. But yet our Saviours Coming wrought great Alterations. For Paganiſm to give place to our Chriſtian Religion; for Idols to bow down, and Chriſt's Croſs to be exalted; the aboliſhing of thoſe Superſtitions, in which the world was drowned, and that againſt the Sea, and Torrent of ſo long Cuſtom, againſt the Wit, and Learning of their wiſeſt Philoſophers, againſt the rage, and cruelty of perſecuting Princes: 'twas a ſtrange Alteration. *Miratus eſt orbis ſe factum Chriſtianum.* The world wondred at ſo ſudden a Change, could not believe it ſhould hold, and continue. The Pagans had a Dream, which they pleaſed themſelves withal, that Chriſtianity ſhould continue but three hundred ſixty five years, and then Idolatry ſhould be reſtored. 'Twas a ſtrange wonder to ſee all the wild Beaſts repair to the Ark, and gently to ſubmit to *Noah*'s Government of them. To ſee Pagans, and Idolaters, abandon their Idols, and flock to Chriſt's Church: *non hominum actu, ſed Dei nutu*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, not driven by men, but guided, and led, by a ſecret hand; 'twas a great Alteration. C D

Nay; not only the Common people, more eaſily wrought upon; but that Princes, and Emperours ſhould be carried along in this great Mutation, that the Churches Perſecutors ſhould become Protectors; like *Abimelech*, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*, who, firſt, would have deflowred *Sarah*, afterwards honoured her, and protected her; or, as *Nebuchadnezzar*, firſt compelling to Idolatry, then ſuddenly changed, and forbidding Blaſphemy. For this Ark of God, at the firſt Entrance, to ſtrike *Dagon* down, and yet the *Philiſtines* to enrich it with Gifts, and Offerings. E

A Offerings. *Hæc eſt mutatio dextræ Excelſi*; a glorious Alteration.

This Change by Chriſt's coming doth manifeſt it ſelf,

2. *In moribus hominum.* It civilized, and ſanctified the Diſpoſitions of men. Man-kind, before Chriſt, was, like the Dæmoniack in the Goſpel, untractable, and outragious; now, we ſit at Chriſt's Feet, gentle, and peaceable. *Eſay* foretels this Change to be wrought upon Chriſt's Incarnation, Chap. xi. *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf and the young Lyon; for this little Childe ſhall lead them.*

Saint *Chryſoſtome* makes it the great Demonſtration of Chriſtian
B Religion, that it can ſoften, and ſweeten the moſt barbarous Natures. In Diſputes for our Religion with Heathens, and Infidels, we call for no Miracles, ſaith he; *Quin homines proferimus antea Beſtiis truciores, Angelorum nunc imitatores effectos.* Chriſt's coming ſhall turn *Swords into Ploughſhears, Spears into Pruning-Hooks*, Eſai. ii. 4. that is, ſaith *Tertullian*, *Feros, & ſævos animos, in probos, & boni fructus operarios.* He will turn Inſtruments of cruelty into diſpoſitions of Mercy. *Out of the Devourer comes Honey*, ſaith *Sampſon*, ἀπὸ τῦ ἐδίοντ@ βρῶσις, κ) γλυκύ, that is, ſaith Saint *Baſil*, ἀπὸ ωσαυθρώπυ σκληθρωπία. And St. *Auguſtine* alludes to the ſame riddle often; *Ore Leonis favus ex ſtructus*, that is,
C *perſecutores Eccleſiæ, dulcedine Evangelicâ imbuentur.* The *Perſians*, ſaith *Chryſoſtme*, that in their Gentiliſm profeſſed Inceſt, now by Chriſt's coming do practice Chaſtity. The *Britains*, ſaith he, fed on man's Fleſh, *nunc jejuniis reficiunt animas ſuas.* They, that can tame Lyons, and Tygers, how are they wondred at? How glorious is our Saviour, that can alter, and change ſuch barbarous diſpoſitions?

This change and alteration appeared,

3. *In modo Rituum*, in the ſhaking, and removal of *Moſes* his Rites, and Law of Ceremonies. The Apoſtle makes good this interpretation, Heb. xii. 27. *It ſignifies the removing of thoſe things that are*
D *ſhaken, and the bringing in of thoſe things that ſhould remain.* Chriſt's coming, 'tis called by the Apoſtle, *The time of Reformation*: it put the period to all Legal obſervances. When Chriſt came, ſaith *Chryſoſtome*, *Zachary* was ſtruck dumb; the old Prieſthood was ſilent. As *Theodoret* doth moralize our Saviour's purging the Temple; *He caſt out the Oxen, and Sheep, and thoſe that ſold Doves*; Have theſe things hence, *Mine Houſe ſhall be called an Houſe of Prayer*: He removed thoſe proviſions of outward Sacrifices; the Incenſe of Prayer was the Sacrifice of the Goſpel. Ἃ σκία ὤφελήκασι, ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐπεισήχθη, ſaith *Nazianzen.* Theſe ſhadows flee away, when the Truth is exhibited.

E There are two times in the day, when the Shadows are longeſt, and exceed the Body; in the morning, and at evening, before the Sun ſets. The time of the Law, that was the morning of the Church; then the ſhadows of Religion were larger, then the ſubſtance: and it will be a Sign of the evening, and Sun-ſet of Religion, when theſe ſhadows ſhall be ſtreteh'd out again, and out-reach the Body. Our Times are the noon-tide of the Goſpel: the ſhadow is contracted; but the Body of Truth is in its full proportion.

This

Sermon I.

This wearing away of *Jewiſh* Ceremonies is typified by *Moſes* in the Law of Sacrifice, *Numb.* xix. At the *Feaſt of Tabernacles* (and that, ſay ſome, was a Type of Chriſt's Birth; ἐσκήνωσεν *He pitched his Tabernacle* then amongſt men,) at the Feaſt, on the firſt day they offered thirteen Bulls, the next day twelve; ſo dayly decreaſing, till they came to one: ſhewing thereby, that the Legal Sacrifices were to diminiſh, and wear away, and to end in that one precious Sacrifice of the *Lamb of God. Thoſe Rites* (ſaith Saint *Bernard*) *were but Buds and Bloſſoms: Prodeunte fructu, flos decidit; apparente veritate, figura pertranſit. The Flower fades*, ſaith Saint *Peter*; *Sed Verbum Domini* (this word *Incarnate*) abides for ever. Thoſe Rites and Ceremonies were but a Pædagogy for Children: Chriſtians are grown Men. *Were it not ridiculous* (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) *to ſee a grown Man go to School with Children, to have an Horning-book at his Girdle, and to learn his Letters?*

They had their uſe in their time, and were comely, and beautiful; but now, *præſentia Chriſti* is *gloria Templi*. The Knowledg and Worſhip of Chriſt, 'tis the beauty and glory of the Temple. *Solomon's* Cloud muſt vaniſh before this Sun of Righteouſneſs. What the Prophet threatned to the Altar at *Bethel*. is juſtly applyable to the Altar at *Jeruſalem*; *O Altar, Altar, a Childe ſhall be born*, Jeſus *by Name, that ſhall put an end to thy Sacrifices, and bring in more ſignificant and ſanctifying and ſaving Ordinances.*

And that's the third kind of Shakings; *Concluſio mutationis.*

IV. There is yet a Fourth, and that's *Concuſſio vehementis adductionis*; a ſtrong powerful drawing of men to a Chriſtian converſion. The working of men to the embracing of Chriſt, it is not done *nutu voluntatis, ſed nixu potentiæ*; as St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaks in the like caſe. Shaking and trembling, fear and aſtoniſhment are the uſual preparations to bring us to Chriſt. As the Gaoler, a great Earth-quake went before the Foundations of the Priſon were ſhaken, horrour and amazement ſeized upon him before his converſion. Comfort, and aſſurance is not the firſt immediate work of Grace; but other Preparations muſt fit us for it. As *Chryſoſtome* compares it; They that die Purple, and Scarlet, put their cloth in other colours firſt, then afterwards they put into the richeſt Tincture, and 'twill laſt the better: So the Soul of a Sinner muſt have other affections of fear, and ſorrow, of anguiſh, and perplexity; and then Chriſt, and his Goſpel, are more ſweet and ſeaſonable. *Moſes* muſt hew the Tables, on which God will write: Repentance muſt firſt hew our hearts, before Chriſt and his Spirit write his Goſpel upon them. The Law, ſaith *Fulgentius*, muſt firſt make us *inexcuſabiles*; then Chriſt, and his Goſpel will make us *inaccuſabiles*. Firſt Fear muſt cry out, *O! there is no ſalvation*; Quis excuſabit? *Who ſhall excuſe us?* then Faith will aſſure us, *There is no condemnation*; Quis accuſabit? *Who ſhall condemn us?* Firſt God darts into us flaſhes of Lightning, horrours, nnd perplexity: then he ſheds into us Beams of comfort, and gleams of glory.

That's the firſt Particular, the ſolemn Preparation before Chriſt's

A Christ's Coming: *I will ſhake all Nations.* We proceed to the *Second,* The gracious performance of this bleſſed Promiſe: *The Deſire of all Nations ſhall come.*

A ſweet Expreſſion, a winning Deſcription of our Saviour Chriſt: He is *the Deſire of all Nations. Deliciæ humani generis*; the Hope, and Love, the Deſire, and Joy of the Sons of men; the bleſſing of Mankind, and comfort of the World. All his other Titles are as Ingredients to make up this Perfume; all like Letters to ſpell up this Name, *The Deſire of all Nations.*

Indeed, Chriſt is the Deſire of all things in Heaven, and Earth:
B and his Incarnation that great work, that all things looked for.

I. He was *Deſiderium Patris*, the Deſire, and Joy, and Delight of his Father. No only in his Deity, but as he was Incarnate, God did infinitely delight in him. He was his *Lemuel*, his Son, the Son of his Boſom, the Son of his Deſires. *Gloria Patris, Filius ſapiens*; ſaith *Somon.* The Son Incarnate was the *Wiſdom of his Father*, and he gloried in him. 'Twas *Plato*'s conceit, that God was *Elatus gaudio, mundo condito:* Surely he was highly pleaſed, deeply delighted with this Maſter-piece of his Wiſdom, Power, Mercy, Chriſt's Incarnation.

Saint *Ambroſe* compares God's Love to Chriſt, as he was Incarnate,
C to the love, that, *Jacob* bore to his Son *Joſeph.* He was *Filius ſenectutis*, πλυκὺς· So (ſaith He) Chriſt was *mundo ſeneſcente natus*; intended from eternity, but born in this laſt Age of the World: ----*mea ſera, & ſola voluptas.* When *Iſaac* ſmelt the ſmell of his Son's Raiment; *O*, ſaid he, *The ſmell of my Son is as the ſmell of a Field, which the* LORD *hath bleſſed.* Not only the Divinity of Chriſt, but the garment of our Fleſh upon him, the fragrancy of that makes him amiable to his Father.

'Twas the will, and deſire of his Father to have him Incarnate. *He came not of himſelf, but his Father ſent him. Come, I will ſend thee to thy*
D *brethren*, ſaid *Jacob* to his Son *Joſeph*; *Go, I pray thee, ſee whether it be well with them.* This Incarnation for our Redemption was not the love of Chriſt only, without, or againſt his Father's liking: not, like *Jonathan*'s kindneſs to *David*, ſore againſt his Father's will. He undertook not our Cauſe, nor vanquiſhed our enemies, as *Jonathan* made his onſet on the *Philiſtines, his Father not knowing it*; nor did God part with him unwillingly, and upon much importunity, as *Jacob* did with *Benjamin* to ranſom his brother: No; his coming was the Deſire of his Father, God ſent him, gave him Commiſſion to atchieve our Salvation, he had a ſpecial Command; *This Command have I received of my*
E *Father.*

It makes much to the fulneſs of our Salvation, that Chriſt ſteps not in as a private mediating Friend; but is imployed by God, comes with full authority to negotiate, and tranſact the work of our Redemption. He is the Apoſtle of our profeſſion, *Heb.* iii. 1. The promiſe of Chriſt's coming was not faintly made, or ſlightly purpoſed: No; God zealouſly affected it, *The zeal of the LORD of Hoſts ſhall perform it*, Eſai. ix. 7. That's

Sermon I.

That's the first, He is *Desiderium Patris.* A

II. Christ was *Desiderium Angelorum*; the desire of the Angels. They longed for this glorious work of our Saviour's Incarnation. They wondered at it, and were ravished with joy at the glory of it. Those *Stars of the morning sang together*, and all the *Sons of God shouted* for joy at his manifestation. How did Heaven empty it self to behold the spectacle? The *Angels ascended*, and *descended upon the Son of man.* Those glorious Spirits had rather be in the stable with Christ, then in Heaven without him. This Day of Christs Nativity was a Festival for the Angels. They do συναγάλλεσθαι, καὶ συμπανηγυρίζειν σήμερον, saith *Nazianzen.* It makes Holy-day in Heaven. Envy at this great honour B done to our Nature (as some Divines conceive) was the first, and great sin of the revolting Angels. The Devils repined at it: But the blessed Angels desired it, and earnestly longed for it. They desired, that the ruins of Heaven might be this way repaired: *Soliciti, ut veniant lapides vivi, ad instaurandam ruinam cæli,* saith *Bernard.* They hungred, and thirsted after this Mystery. Those glorious Spirits, when Christ came in the Flesh, cast not down Boughs from the Trees, but Crowns from their Heads, and adored his Incarnation. They were never satisfied with searching into this Mystery. *Into these things the Angels desire to look,* 1 Pet. i. 12. They are still listning, and learning C by the Church the *great wisdom of God, treasured up in Christ.* The Curtains of the Tabernacle were embroidered all with Cherubims: that typified, there is a throng of Angels in our Churches. Angels assemble themselves in our Congregations to partake these Mysteries. We count Christ's Incarnation but a common ordinary Truth, milk for Babes only: Nay; saith the Father, 'Tis ἄρτος ἀγγέλων, ὃν τρέφονται, καὶ πτίζονται· 'Tis the hidden Manna, and Food of Angels.

That's a *second*; He was *desiderium Angelorum.*

III. Christ was *desiderium totius Creaturæ.* He was the desire, and longing of all the Creation. The whole frame, and fabrick of the D World desired him. The whole Creation by a secret, but yet forcible instinct waited, and longed for his Incarnation. His Coming was their greatest perfection, and full accomplishment. The highest advancement the Creature is capable of, was the Hypostatical Union. The whole world received a glorious perfection, in that Man's Nature, the choice of the Creatures, obtained that Priviledge. The Incarnation wrought this great work, filled up that infinite distance betwixt God, and the Creature. *Supremum infimi* did *auttingere infimum Supremi:* the Creature made as near to God, as possibly it could be. That Contradiction in St. *Augustine* is here reconciled; *Impossibile* E *est Deo aut æqualem sibi facere Creaturam; aut inæqualem filium.* This sacred Mystery hath accorded that impossibility. Christ is now become the Head to the whole Creation. Indeed *Caput naturale influentiæ* he is only to his Church, for life, and government; but *Caput eminentis regiminis:* he is to all Creatures, for authority, and regiment. And, as he is the Creatures highest perfection: so, upon their decay, they longed

A longed for him for their reparation; that by whom the World was firſt made, by him it might be reſtored.

'Twas by ſin, made ſubject to vanity, liable to corruption, blaſted with God's curſe; Chriſt was to take off that curſe, and reſtore the world to it's firſt integrity. *The earth, and all the Inhabitants thereof, are diſſolved, I bear up the pillars of it*, Pſal.lxxv. 3. Chriſt *upholds all things by the word of his power*, Heb.i.3. *The earneſt expectation of the Creature waited for the manifeſtation of the Son of God*, Rom. viii. 19. See what words of deſire, and longing, the Apoſtle uſes;

1. It hopes for him.

B 2. It earneſtly expects him. Ἀποκαραδοκῆ, *erecto capite*: as *Siſera*'s Mother, looking out at the Windows; *Why is his Chariot ſo long a coming? why tarry the wheels of his Chariot?*

3. Συστενάζει, It ſighs, and groans for him, as impatient of his ſtay.

4. Συνωδίνει, It travels in pain, longing till Chriſt ſhall repair, and reſtore it. *Reparabitur hæreditas cùm venerit hæres.* Now the King is come, *He will reſtore all things.* What the Husbandmen ſaid wickedly, we may ſay comfortably, *Hic eſt hæres*; See, the heir is coming to us, let us receive him thankfully; *and the inheri-*
C *tance ſhall be ours.*

IV. Chriſt was *deſiderium Patriarcharum.* The People of God in the Old Teſtament, they looked for him. *Many Prophets, and Kings longed for this day, but could not attain to it*, Luk x.24. *Abraham*, he deſired to ſee this day of Chriſt, Joh. viii.56. Old *Jacob* on his death-bed, he groaned for it. *I have waited for thy ſalvation*, Gen.xlix. 18.

'Twas the honourable Title of the Saints before Chriſt, they are called Waiters, and Expecters. *Simeon* was one that *waited for the conſolation of* Iſrael, *Luk.* ii. 25. *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, he *waited for the Kingdom of God*, Mark. xv. 43. Many a long look did they fetch
D for his Coming.

This bleſſed Birth was like thoſe Types that prefigured him; *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and *Joſeph*, long ſued for, and deſired, before they were obtained. LORD, *what wilt thou give us, if thou giveſt not thy Son?* was the voice of their Faith. How did they ſearch, and enquire diligently when, and what time, Chriſt ſhould be born? It buſied all their thoughts. I; that's the guiſe of Wayters, and Expecters. As St. *Bernard*, upon thoſe words of the Goſpel, *Eſtote ſimiles hominibus expectantibus*. If we ſee men ploughing in the field, or trading in the Market, we ſay not to them, *Whom do you look for? Neque enim ſimiles*
E *ſunt expectantibus*: but, if we ſee one calling, and knocking at the door, and look up to the Windows, *Nihil mirum, ſi dicitur, Quem expectas?* It kept their Faith waking, and liſtning, and obſerving the times, and ſeaſons, and ſigns of his coming. They were not like the drowſie Virgins; but their Lamps were burning. Nay; 'twas not only the waiting of the Virgins, which were her companions; but the waiting of the Spouſe for the coming of the Bridegroom. *Let him kiſs me*

Sermon I.

with the Kiſſes of his lips, Cant. i. 2. 'Twas *vox Patriarcharum deſiderantium Chriſti adventum*, ſaith the Father. *Felix oſculum, in quo non os ori imprimitur; ſed Deus homini unitur.* They longed for the Nuptials of his Incarnation. *The delay of this coming was the reaſon*, ſaith *Gregory*, *why the Saints complained, their days were ſhortned; becauſe they could not live to ſee Chriſt in the Fleſh.* They only ſaluted the Promiſe afar off, and dyed in the Faith of it. A

But yet the Emphaſis of the Text lies chiefly upon this, that Chriſt comes as *The Deſire of the Nations.* And 'tis our great comfort, that Mankind was the aim, and end of his coming. The Angels deſired him, and the Creatures longed for him, and they both got good by him; but he came to us upon primary intention. *Venit ad homines*; nay, *propter homines.* He wrought our deliverance, not upon the by, as *David* ſaved *Nabal*'s Flocks, while he was in the Wilderneſs upon his own occaſions; or, like the *Samaritan*, that went upon other buſineſs, and chanced to meet us, and finde us in our miſery, and ſtept out of his way to help us: but came purpoſely to us; *Ad hoc natus eſt.* Now, ſurely, he will not fruſtrate the main end of his Nativity. B

And, as 'twas for Mankind, ſo 'twas for all. He was born an Univerſal good for all People, and Languages. The original Promiſe was made to Mankinde in general. Indeed, upon the enrolment, it had a ſpecial entail to *Abraham*'s Poſterity. *All Nations ſhall worſhip the* LORD *at the Feaſt of Tabernacles*, Zech. xiv. 16. That Feaſt (ye heard before) was a Type of Chriſt's Nativity; all People have their ſhare in this great Feſtival. C

But then the Enquirie will be, How the Nations can be thought to deſire our Saviour before his coming? Alaſs! by Nature we had neither ſence of miſery, nor hope of mercy. Chriſt was not in all our thoughts. *Nemo orat, niſi qui credit, & ſperat*, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine.* How can they deſire him, in whom they never believed? How can they believe in him, of whom they never heard? *Ejus deſiderio flagrantes æſtuant, cujus ſuavitatem fide deguſtant*, ſaith *Gregory*. We had no relliſh of him. *Ut deſideratus ſit expectantibus, prius oportuit jam dilectum eſſe credentibus*, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine.* The Nations neither knew him, nor loved him; how could they deſire him? What the *Shunammite* ſaid to *Eliſha*, mankinde may ſay to God, *Did I deſire a Son of my Lord?* Did we once think of this means of Salvation? Nay; verily, the coming of Chriſt is *deſiderium ex promiſſo, non promiſſum ex deſiderio.* Gods promiſe muſt beget our deſires; our deſires do not occaſion Gods promiſes to us. *Eſurire Chriſtum non poſſumus, niſi ipſe nos excitat, ut quæratur*; ſaith *Fulgentius.* How is it then conceiveable, that Chriſt ſhould be the Deſire, and Expectation of all Nations? D E

Take it in theſe Expreſſions;

Firſt, He was *deſiderium Nationum*, that is, *deſideratus pro Nationibus.* The Faith of God's People deſired his coming, not for themſelves, but for others alſo. *God perſwade* Japhet *to dwell in the*

Tents

A *Tents of* Sem, was the Prayer of the Patriarchs. *Let the People praiſe thee, O God, Let all the People praiſe thee; Let the ends of the World ſee the ſalvation of our God.* The *Jews* received theſe Promiſes not for themſelves only; but unto us they did miniſter the Bleſſings of the Goſpel. They were Feoffees in Truſt, to whom the Promiſes, and Covenant was committed for the good of others alſo. He was to be a Joy to all People. The *Jews* were not to engroſs this Oil of Gladneſs to themſelves, but to borrow Veſſels of their Neighbours, and to pour it into them. Thus *Solomon* deſcribes the care of God's People for the *Gentiles* converſion, Cant. viii. 8. *We have a little Siſter, and*
B *ſhe hath no Breaſts; what ſhall we do for our Siſter, when ſhe ſhall be ſpoken for?* The Patriarchs were deſirous to raiſe up ſeed to their dead brethren, the *Gentiles:* they would not be *diſcalceati* in *Iſrael*; but men *ſhod with the preparations of the Goſpel*, deſiring to gain the *Gentiles* to the *Goſpel of Peace.*

Secondly, Chriſt was *deſiderium Nationum.* God had among the *Gentiles* a certain hidden portion. *Etiam apud Gentiles quidam prædeſtinati latitabant*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine.* Some Saints among them, to whom the Promiſe was revealed. *Job* was a *Gentile*, not of *Jacob*'s Poſterity; he was the firſt from *Eſau*, as *Chryſoſtom* accounts him:
C yet, how did he wait for a Saviour? how, like a Jew, nay, like a Chriſtian, a Prophet, nay, an Evangeliſt, doth he confeſs Chriſt? *I know that my Redeemer lives*, Job xix. 25. *Melchiſedech* is, probably, conceived a *Canaaniti∫h* King; all *Abraham*'s Kindred were beyond the Flood; this Countrey was the lot of *Cham*'s Poſterity: and yet *Melchiſedech* an High-Prieſt to God, the moſt lively Type of the promiſed Meſſiah.

Even in thoſe dark Times, *Illuxerunt quædam coruſcationes orbi terrarum*, ſaith *Proſper:* ſome Flaſhes of Light brake in upon them, to awaken their Faith to this expectation. *Paucis ad remedium, omnibus*
D *ad teſtimonium*, ſaith He. Few there were, but yet ſome, that believed theſe Promiſes, and deſired their fulfilling.

But yet this makes not up the fulneſs of this glorious Style. What, though ſome few did deſire, and expect him? This Scripture offers more grace, and comfort. He muſt be the *Deſire of all People*, and *Nations*, in a more enlarged ſenſe, and of greater extenſion.

Conceive it thus. *Deſire* implies three motions, or affections, and they put upon the thing deſired three qualifications.

I. It is ſeen *in appetitione*, in longing, and wiſhing. That implies *indigentiam*, great Need, and Neceſſity.

E II. It is ſeen *in adeptione*, in attaining, and poſſeſſing. That implies *Satisfactionem*; it gives Contentment, and full Satisfaction.

III. It is ſeen *in fruitione*, in enjoyment, and fruition. That implies *Complacentiam*, the comfortable Complacency, and full delectation. All of them eminently in our deſire of Chriſt.

I. *Deſire* implies *indigentiam.* Neceſſity breeds deſire: Want begets wiſhing. The *Nations*, all Mankind ſtood in need of Chriſt.

Sermon I. Neceſſity, 'tis a real deſire: Miſery naturally calls for mercy. As we ſay, The dry-parched earth deſires Rain; becauſe it needs it. Our Miſery calls for a Saviour, though our Prayers did not. As *Job* ſpeaks of the poor, *Their Loins bleſſed him, being warmed by his Fleeces*: though their Hearts, may be, or their Tongues did not: ſo our Miſery, and Thraldom, the woful extremity, into which we were caſt, that called loud in the ears of God, *Why haſt thou made all men for nought?* that pleaded for a Saviour. A

This neceſſity of Chriſt, 'tis compared to the moſt earneſt, and eager longings. 'Tis called an Hungring; that's earneſt, and violent, when it comes to extremity. The anguiſh of Hunger exceeds any other Diſtemper. *Morbi ex inedia* are *acriores, quàm qui ex repletione*; 'tis the Phyſician's Aphoriſm. No Sickneſs ſo extreme, as the famiſhing of Hunger. 'Tis called a Thirſting; and the violence of that exceeds the other of Hunger. Κρεῖττον ἀνέχονται διψῶντες, ἢ πεινῶντες, ſaith *Ariſtotle*. Our ſouls were not as a Garden watered; but burnt up, as a dry, parched Wilderneſs. B

In other Neceſſities, one Nation may fetch ſupply from another; mutual entercourſe may furniſh their Wants: but, for this ſupply, make *Ahab*'s ſearch in all Countreys, and Kingdoms; they will confeſs their want, and neceſſity. All Nations ſhut up under Sin. The greateſt Conquerours were themſelves but Captives. *Gens victrix Nationum, captiva vitiorum*; ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. All ſtood in need of a Saviour, and Redeemer. C

II. Deſire in the attaining implies *Satisfactionem*. That 'is the Matter of our deſires, the obtaining of which gives full ſatisfaction. And the fulneſs of Chriſt abundantly ſatisfies the deſires of all men. *Anima deſiderat Chriſtum*, ſaith the Father; *non aliud tanquam illum, non aliud præter illum, non aliud poſt illum*: nothing inſtead of him, nothing beſides him, and it deſires nothing after him. *Simeon* deſires to die, when he had ſeen his Saviour. *Oculis videntibus Jeſum, nihil dignum viſu præter Jeſum.* D

Other Deſires are empty, and unſatisfying: nay, they engender after-vexation. The Father compares it to the itching of a Soar; *Scalpendo exulceratur, ſuccedit pruritui cruciatus*. The Prophet compares it to a *Dream of meat, when he awakes, his ſoul is empty*. But Chriſt is fully ſufficient to ſatisfie the Soul. Let *Agabus* his dearth be upon all the World, *this living Bread, that comes down from Heaven*, ſhall give life to the World. *Whence ſhall we have Bread enough to ſatisfie ſo many?* Yes, ſaith God; *I will make a Feaſt to all people, ſaith the* LORD, *a Feaſt of fat things, and they ſhall be ſatisfied*. Thus, ſaith *Origen*, Chriſt anſwers all deſires, To every part, and power of the Soul, Chriſt becomes a kindly, proper, full ſatisfaction. He is called the *True Light*; that the Eye of the Soul may have wherewith to be enlightned. He is the Word; that the Ear of the Soul may have what to hear: the Bread of Life: that the Taſte of the Soul may have what to feed upon. Indeed Chriſt hath in him all, that we need, or E

can

A can poſſibly wiſh for. He is the Poor mans riches, the Deſpiſed mans honour, the Hungry man's food, the Sick man's health, and the Dying man's life. Other things may afford us ſome ſmall refreſhings: His coming brings life it ſelf, and brings it in abundance; Job x. 10. *Ab iſtis ſalubritas quædam, ab hoc ſalus ipſa petenda eſt.* That's the *Second.*

III. *Deſire* in the fruition breeds Joy, and Complacency. *The deſire fulfilled,* ſaith *Solomon, is a Tree of Life.* Here we have the true Tree of Life, the *very leaves whereof ſhall heal the Nations. Mulier, quam dediſti nobis,* ſaith *Bernard, LORD, the Woman,*
B *that thou haſt given* (ſpeaking of the bleſſed Virgin) *hath given us of the Tree of Life, and we ſhall live for ever by it.* O, the fruit of this Tree, 'tis good for food, 'tis pleaſant to the eye, a Tree to be deſired, to make us happy. *Eſay* wonders at thoſe, that can ſee no beauty in this pleaſant Plant, that they ſhould not delight in him, that count him as a withered root out of a dry ground, without form, or comelineſs. As *Ariſtotle* told him, that wondred what Beauty was, that men were ſo taken with it; it was πήρλς ἐρώτικα, a Blinde man's Queſtion. See how the Spouſe, when ſhe hath found her Beloved,
C ſurveys all his Beauty: *He is the comelieſt of ten thouſand; ſpecioſus præ filiis hominum.* All the attractives of love, and delight are eminently in him. He is exceeding lovely, infinite loving. His lovelineſs provokes love, his lovingneſs challenges it. The enjoying of both, how can it but raiſe the World to an ecſtaſie of joy, and holy Raviſhment?

We have ſeen the *ſecond* thing of the Text, the promiſe aſſured us; *The deſire of all Nations ſhall come.*

And this, 'tis not a ſingle Promiſe; 'tis a Promiſe pregnant. It includes, and implies other promiſes with it. Great, and precious Promiſes are conveyed to us by it.

D *Firſt,* Here is *Promiſſio de vocatione Gentium.* Here is a Door of hope ſet open for the *Gentiles*; it concerns us nearly, it is the Tenure, we hold by. We were ſinners of the *Gentiles.* It ſhould much affect us, to ſee our Names enrolled in this great Conveyance, when we never thought of it. For a mere ſtranger to read over a rich man's Will, whom he never knew, and there to find himſelf Joynt-heir with the children, and the whole Eſtate entailed upon him; it would deeply affect him.

Look to the rock, from whence you were hew'n; nay, to the dung-hill, from whence you were raiſed; (ſo *David* deſcribes the calling of
E the *Gentiles,* Pſal. cxiii. 7.) *The promiſe belongs to yu, and to your children, and to thoſe that were afar off:* that was our Condition. Afar off by Nature; farther off by ſin; yet farther by divine deſertion, left to our ſelves; farther yet by excluſion, ſhut out from the people of God; nay, yet farther, by enmity, and wilful oppoſition; removed from God by all theſe diſtances, and yet the Promiſe belongs to us.

I. The

Sermon I.

I. The latter *Jews* liked not this clauſe in the Covenant; they had almoſt made a raſure in this great Conveyance. The calling of the *Gentiles* did much diſtaſt them: fain would they have cut off this entail. To the unbelieving *Jews*, it was *magnum Scandalum*; they abhorred to hear of it. *Aaron*, and *Miriam* ſnuffed at *Moſes*, *ob Æthiopiſſam*, for marrying an *Ethiopian*: They diſdain at Chriſt, for marrying to himſelf the Church of the *Gentiles*. When Chriſt did but darkly allude to *Naaman* the *Syrian*, and the Widow of *Sarepta*, (Types of the *Gentiles*) it had like to have coſt him his life, *Luke* iv.

II. To the believing *Jews* 'twas *magnum dubium*. *Peter* made a ſtand at it; when *Cornelius* ſent to him, God was fain to encourage him, and give him his Warrant for it. *Jonah* fled from *Joppa*, when God ſent him to the *Gentiles*: and *Peter* would have ſtayed at *Joppa*, forborn to Preach to them, had not a Viſion commanded him.

III. Even to *Paul* himſelf, the Doctor of the *Gentiles*, it was *Magnum Myſterium*, Epheſ. iii. 9. Indeed there were Prophecies of it; but how they ſhould be fulfilled, how the *Gentiles* ſhould be incorporated into the Church, was a great Secret to them. As Saint *Auguſtine*, and others, denyed the Antipodes, becauſe they could not conceive, what Paſſage was to them from the habitable World; ſo even the chief Apoſtles wondred how the *Gentiles*, the Churches Antipodes, could ever paſs that ſame, μίγα χάσμα, and joyn with God's People.

IV. It was *Magnum Miraculum*. When it was effected, it bred great Admiration. *Who hath heard ſuch a thing? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or ſhall a Nation be born at once?* Eſai. lxvi. 8.

No; this Work was reſerved to our Saviours coming. *Soli Chriſto repoſita erat vocandarum Gentium prærogativa*, ſaith *Gregory*. He came not, as *Moſes* to the *Hebrews*; but as *Jonah* to *Nineveh*, *Elijah* to *Sarepta*. He left Father, and Mother (*Patrem cœleſtem*, and *Matrem Synagogam*) to marry us *Gentiles*. Like *Benjamin*, though we came laſt, and were youngeſt, and ſate loweſt, yet our Portion, 'tis five times greater, then our elder Brethren's; the fulneſs of the *Gentiles*, to the gleaning of the *Jews*.

That's the *firſt Promiſe*.

Secondly, Here is *Promiſſio de unitate Eccleſiæ*. *All Nations* pitched upon one deſire; all expect the ſame common ſalvation. Before, ſo many Nations, ſo many ſuppoſed Deities; now the *LORD ſhall be One, and his Name ſhall be One*, ſaith the Prophet *Zachary*. It was the end of his coming, *to gather into one all, that were ſcattered*, Joh. xi. 52. By his Incarnation, there is, ſaith St. *Paul*, an ἀνακεφαλαίωσιν of all, all reduced, and brought under one Head. Now all things in Heaven, and Earth, are made but one Family, Epheſ. iii. 15. Particular Congregations make now but one Church; *Diviſi in ramis, uniti in radice*.

'Twas that St. *Auguſtine* objects to the *Donatiſts*, that this Unity of one Chriſt could not keep them in Union. They multiplyed Churches.

A Churches. *De iſto fruſto quàm multa fruſta per* Africam *facta ſunt?* The unity with Chriſt in the Catholick Faith would not ſerve their turn; they muſt hold of another Head. If one come amongſt them, and aſſured them of his Religion, *Chriſtianus ſum*; that he was Baptized, *Fidelis ſum*; that he lived in the Churches Peace, *Catholicus ſum*; *Chriſtianus, Fidelis, Catholicus* would not ſerve the turn; *Donatus* his Ear-mark muſt be ſet upon him, or they did reject him.

Thirdly, Here is *Promiſſio de amplitudine Chriſti.* Chriſt's Church ſhall be gathered out of all Nations. *All Kings ſhall down before him, all Nations ſhall worſhip him.* Chriſt is not *Deus Topicus*, ſome B Regionary God, as the Heathen had theirs; but *the* LORD *of the whole earth.* The Altar of the New-Teſtament ſhall more then twice exceed the bigneſs of *Moſes* his Altar, Ezek. xliii. The offering up of the *Gentiles* ſhall far exceed all the *Iews* Oblations. The Chriſtian Church ſhall be *Mundi totius Templum*, a Sanctuary for all People. Before, the Church was confined to the Families of *Iſrael*; then God was ſtyled *The God of* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *quaſi trium hominum eſſet Deus*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*: Now, he is *The God of all the Kindreds of the Earth*, *All Nations ſhall be of one lip*; ſpeak the Language of *Canaan.*

C The benefit of Chriſt's Birth, ſaith *David*, ſhall extend to *Rahab*, and *Babylon*, to *Tyre*, and *Ethiopia*: *Lo, there was he born*, Pſal. lxxxvii. 4. *Ibi naſcitur, ubi Nativitas creditur, & annunciatur.* Every place as *Bethlehem*, and the Cities of the Aliens ſhall be holy as *Ieruſalem.* A full Moon makes a full Sea; and the full exhibition of Chriſt makes an enlarged Church. When he comes, *the earth ſhall be filled with the Knowledg of God, as the Waters cover the Sea*, Hab. ii. 14.

Fourthly, Here is *Promiſſio de gaudio Eccleſiæ.* Deſire fulfilled and accompliſhed, turns into Joy; and that's the happy condition of the Chriſtian Church. We are in a ſtate of fruition: the Church before D Chriſt was in a ſtate of expectation. *Let the hearts of thoſe rejoyce that ſeek the* LORD. *Gaudium quærentium*, 'tis a great deal leſs, then *gaudium invenientium.* They ſaluted the Promiſes afar off, we poſſeſs, and embrace them.

Spectare jucundius, quàm expectare; 'tis more joy to look on him, then only to look for him. *I ſhall ſee him, but not now*; *I ſhall behold him, but not nigh*; was all the diſcovery, that their Faith could make: *We have heard, and ſeen, and handled the Word of Life.* The ſtretchings-out of their Faith are nothing ſo comfortable, as the embracings of ours. It becomes us to rejoyce. It's meet we ſhould make merry, and E be glad. We have found not the loſt groat, but an unvaluable Treaſure; not a ſtray ſheep, but the Lamb of God; not a forlorn Prodigal, but the only begotten, and beloved of his Father: it becomes us to rejoyce.

The Church before Chriſt was, like barren *Annah*, weeping, and ſorrowing, and begging of a Son: the Church now is like fruitful *Annah*, rejoycing at his Birth; *I was the Woman, that prayed for this Childe,*

Sermon I.

Childe, and the LORD *hath given the petition I have asked of him.* *Annah*'s Song, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, 'tis not *Canticum unius fœminæ pro filio; ſed totius Eccleſiæ pro Chriſto.* The Holy Virgins Magnificat for Chriſt, if ye will compare them, 'tis fullly the ſame with it: *And bleſſed are the People that know this joyful ſound*, and can rejoyce in him. If we rejoyce not, he is not wanting to us, but we are wanting to our ſelves: *ut ægri, qui pereunt non fame, ſed faſtidio*; we miſcarry not with longing, but with loathing ſo great Salvation.

Nay, let *the voyce of joy and gladneſs be heard in all our dwellings*, And let our joyfulneſs abound in the fruits of thankfulneſs for this ineſtimable benefit; that, rejoycing here in his holy comfort, we may, in his good time, lift up our heads with joy, at his ſecond appearance: and that for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake, *&c.*

A

B

C

ON

D

E

ON CHRISTMASS-DAY,

The Second Sermon.

Saint JOHN iii. 19.

This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and men loved Darkneſs rather then Light.

THIS great Feſtival, which we now Celebrate, 'tis the religious, thankful Commemoration, which the Church of God makes of the great Benefit of our Saviour's Incarnation; the taking of our Nature upon him, for the accompliſhment of our Redemption; the laying aſide his Robes of Glory, and the putting on of the Rags of our Humanity, and Frailty. As the King of *Iſrael* deſcended from his Chariot, put off his royal Apparel, and in the habit of a common Souldier entred into the Battel: ſo, now, our Saviour diveſted himſelf of his heavenly Glory, came down from his Throne of Majeſty, clothed himſelf with the Fleſh of frail man, entred into the Battel, to conquer our enemies, to ranſom, and reſcue our thraldom, and captivity. As *David* came down to viſit his Brethren, deſcended into the valley with his ſtaff, and ſling, and Shepherd's ſcrip, to encounter *Goliah*: So (ſaith *Bernard*) *Dominus exercituum fit Paſtor Ovium*; undertakes to ſlay the Lion, the Bear, the uncircumciſed *Philiſtine*, and to ſave his Flock, and People from their enemies. That's the Myſtery of the day, the meaning of this ſervice, as *Moſes* ſpeaks, *Exod.* xii. 25. The benefit we celebrate, 'tis the Word Incarnate, dwelling, and converſing amongſt us, and vouchſafing his preſence to the Sons of men.

But then 'twould be known, what's the duty of the day? That's an Enquiry of as great importance It concerns us to ſee, and take notice of that welcome, and entertainment, which the world gives to ſo glorious a Gueſt. *Nobilem hoſpitem habes, O anima, &c.* A great Perſonage

Serm. II. is come amongſt us. At the coming of a King into his Kingdom, men ſit not ſtill; but go forth to meet him, and receive him with all ſigns, and teſtimonies of Joy, and Triumph: They ſet open their Gates, yield up their Keys, proteſt their Allegiance, honour his Perſon with all pomp, and ſolemnity. When *David* returned from the purſuit of *Abſalom*, all *Iſrael*, from *Dan* to *Beerſheba*, flocked out to meet him. When *Saul* returned from the Wars, the Daughters of *Iſrael* met him with Timbrels, and Dances, and ſongs of his Victory. How then is *this King of Glory* entertained at his coming into the World? Setting aſide ſome contemptible men, a few Shepherds, old *Simeon*, and *Anna*, no conſiderable number; for the generality there was no man regarded him, or took notice of him. *He came into the World, and the World was made by him* (it had good cauſe to acknowledge him) *and the World knew him not*, Joh. i. 10. *He came to his own*, (whom he had endeared to himſelf by ſpecials favours) *but his own received him not.* Nay; they ſhut their Gates againſt him, laboured to exclude him, diſclaimed their Allegiance to him; *We will not have this man rule over us*, Luk. xix. 14. Not Him; but *Cæſar*: any rather then He. At the firſt tidings of his approach, *Hieruſalem*, the Chamber of the King, the head City of the Kingdom was troubled at it, *Mat.* ii. 3. *We hid, as it were, our faces from him, and we eſteemed him not*, Eſai. liii. 3. They all renounced their Intereſt in him: *We have no part in* David, *nor inheritance in this Son of* Jeſſe, 2 *Sam.* xx. 1.

'Tis ſtrange; Had he come as a Conquerour, only to reign, and rule over them; 'twere rebellion to refuſe him: Nay; but he is come as a Saviour, and Deliverer to them, and yet they reject him. 'Twas but a Type of this entertainment, the repulſe, that *Moſes* ſuffered in *Egypt*. *It came into his heart to viſit his Brethren, the Children of Iſrael: he ſuppoſed they would have underſtood, that God by his hand would work their deliverance; but they underſtood it not:* Nay; they thruſt him away, ſaying, *Who hath made thee a Iudge, and a Ruler over us?* Act. vii. 23, 25, 27. 'Tis that Sin, which our Saviour charges upon the World. *God hath ſent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be ſaved*, Ver. 17. I; but the world deſpiſes ſo great ſalvation. 'Tis *Summa delicti*, and *reatus ſeculi*, the grand impiety, that the World muſt anſwer for: *This is their condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and men love Darkneſs rather then Light.*

The Text then, you ſee, is an Exprobration of the great Sin of Infidelity, in not believing in Chriſt, and embracing of that Salvation, which he bring unto us. And this Exprobration is ſharpened and an edge put upon it by a threefold enforcement.

Firſt, From the Nature, and Dignity of the Benefit, that by Chriſt's Incarnation is offered unto us. What was in the Womb of this laſt Night? what hath this day brought forth unto us? *Enixa eſt lucem*; *A great Light is come into the World.*

Secondly, From the Unworthineſs, and great Indignity, that the world, through Infidelity, offers to this Benefit; they reject, and abhor

A abhor this Light, and ſhut it from them. *Let the day when* this *Man childe was born, be darkneſs; let not Light ſhine upon it. Men love Darkneſs rather then Light.*

Thirdly, From the heavy Doom, that this Contempt of Chriſt, and neglect of His Grace, ſhall bring upon the world; 'tis *Titulus damnationis*, the juſt provocation of the world's Perdition: 'tis Their Condemnation.

Thus you ſee the Text hath a double Aſpect.

The firſt gracious, and comfortable; this Light riſes pleaſantly; but then, upon Contempt, it ſets in a diſmal Cloud, and a Tempeſt of heavy
B Indignation. Firſt the morning Sun-ſhine roſe upon *Sodom*; then comes the Storm of Fire, and Brimſtone, *Gen.* xix. 23. Indeed, it repreſents the double Advent of our Saviour; His ſecond revenging the contempt of His firſt. The *Jews* dream of a ſecond Meſſias, *filius* Joſeph, he ſhall be a meek man, and a mean one; and *filius* David, mighty, and victorious. There are both in the Text. Here is *filius* Joſeph *in præſepi*; and *filius* David *pro Tribunali*. Here is the Mercy of his Incarnation, if we have Grace to make uſe of it: and here is the Vengeance for his Rejection at the day of Retribution. Here is the ſound of the Harp, and the Song of the Angels at the day of his Birth; and
C then here is the ſound of the Trumpet, the voyce of the Arch-Angel at the day of Judgment. Here is the ſhining of a Star pointing out his firſt Appearing; and then here is a diſmal Comet in the Text forerunning his ſecond; both *vagitus Infantis*, and *rugitus Leonis*: or, as St. *John* puts them both together, *ira agni*, the fierceſt wrath from the meekeſt Lamb.

Firſt, Let us ſee the Benefit it ſelf, that's now vouchſafed us; Chriſt is *come a Light into the world*. And that's expreſſed in three Particulars:

Firſt, Here is the Nature, and condition of the Benefit; 'tis *Light*.
D *Secondly*, Here is the Approach, and offering, and tendering of this Benefit; 'tis *Come*.

Thirdly, Here is the Place, and Perſons, to whom 'tis offered, and where 'tis expoſed; that's *The world*.

Firſt, Here is the Body of this Sun of righteouſneſs: He is all *Light*.

Secondly, Here is the riſing, and aſcending the Horizon: He is actually *Come*.

Thirdly, Here is the Orb, and Sphere, where it moves, and which it enlightens: *The World*.

Firſt, See the Nature, and Condition of the Benefit, 'tis Light. And
E that makes good to us this Obſervation, That *Chriſt is in himſelf, and is become to us a moſt perfect Light*. This glorious, and admirable Creature of Light, 'tis a fit Reſemblance to repreſent Chriſt. St. *Auguſtine* reports it from *Simplicianus*, the Biſhop of *Millain*, that a *Platonick* Philoſopher, reading thoſe words of the Goſpel, wherein Chriſt is ſet forth as *the light of men*, was deeply affected with that glorious deſcription, and profeſſed, it deſerved to be written with letters

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of Gold, and to be ſet up in the moſt eminent Places of all Churches, and Temples. And 'tis a Repreſentation the Scripture much delights in. Both the Saint *Johns*, the *Evangeliſt*, and the *Baptiſt*, make this the ſum, and ſubſtance of their Miniſtration, to diſcover this Light. The *Evangeliſt* makes it the Tenour of his Preaching. *This is the Meſſage we declare unto you, that God is Light, and in him is no Darkneſs*, 1 Joh. i. 5. And 'twas the *Baptiſt*'s employment to point out, and diſcover, to *bear witneſs of this Light*, Joh. i. 7. Not that Chriſt needed St. *John*'s Teſtimony. *Suo utitur teſtimonio Lux, non alieno ſuffragio*, ſaith *Ambroſe*. We ſee the Sun, by the Sun's light. *John* was but *Lucerna latens*; who lights up a Candle to ſee the Sun? but as St. *Auguſtine* reſolves it, *Propter infirmos, propter incredulos, propter non intelligentes, Sol lucernas quærebat. Fulgorem Solis lippitudo ferre non poteſt.* The world's weak Eyes could not otherwiſe behold it.

So then, let us briefly behold the glory of our Saviour *in hac umbra Lucis*, by this ſhadow, and repreſentation of created light. Not that this, or any other Similitude can fully expreſs him. What proportion is there betwixt the ſmalleſt ſpark, and the whole Globe, and Element of Fire? To compare the glory of Chriſt with the beauty, and luſtre of the moſt reſplendent Creature; what is it, but to compare the glory of the Sun with the glimmerings of the Glow-worm? It's infinitely ſhort of him. *Sed ſic balbutiendum, cùm de Deo loquimur.* We muſt ſpell out theſe unſpeakable Myſteries by the help of theſe low inferiour Rudiments. Hereafter we ſhall have a full view of him; as yet, we muſt content our ſelves with theſe glimpſes of glory. *Adhuc* Joſephus *loquitur per interpretem, manifeſtat ſe nobis ſicut vult, non ſicut eſt*, ſaith *Bernard*. He *ſtands yet behinde the wall, looks forth at the windows* only, ſhews himſelf through this latteſs; and at theſe chinks, and creviſes, let us labour to behold him.

And then conceive our Saviour to be a true Light.

I. *Naturâ, & Eſſentiâ.*

II. *Uſu, & Officio*; by Office, and Employment.

I. In Himſelf, and in his Divine Nature, He is perfect Light.

1. Exceeding clear, as Light: not the leaſt ſhadow, or darneſs of Error in him.

2. Exceeding pure, as Light: no mixture of Evil, no tincture of Corruption in him.

3. Exceeding glorious, as Light: compaſſed with the Beams of Light, and Glory.

Light, 'tis *Tabernaculum Deitatis*, his place, and habitation: He *dwells in that light, that no man can approach unto*; 1 Tim. vi. 16. Light, 'tis *paludamentum Deitatis*, his royal veſture is Light. *He covers himſelf with Light, as with a Garment*, Pſal. civ. 2. Nay, 'tis *ſubſtantia Deitatis*, 'tis his ſubſtantial perfection. *God is Light, and in him is no darkneſs.*

Indeed this Light is not the Light of this day. The Light of his Divinity makes, and meaſures out the day of eternity. 'Tis the light

A light of his Incarnation, the ſhining forth of that, that makes this day of his Nativity. Indeed, that other light, it dazles, and ſwallows up our underſtanding. When we look for light, it turns to darkneſs; our moſt ſublime Meditations enter into the cloud with *Moſes*; *Accedimus ad caliginem, in qua Deus eſt.* The Light of his Divinity, 'tis incomprehenſible: the Beams he ſheds forth, as God Incarnate, are more eaſily conceiveable. As the Body of the Sun, that Light it ſends upward, our eye cannot reach it; the Beams it caſts downward upon this lower Region, we can better behold them.

II. And they ſhew us Chriſt to be a light *Uſu, & Officio*, by Office,
B and Employment. He is not only a light in himſelf, but a light to others. In himſelf he is *Lux lucens*; But as he ſheds forth his Beams to others, ſo he is *Lux illuſtrans*. As the Sun is not only lightſom in its own Body; but diffuſes light to all things about it. All the Benefits of Light are in Chriſt. Reduce them to theſe three.

1. He is *Lux illuminans*; that's the firſt property of Light: to diſpel, and drive away Darkneſs, to Enlighten other things, and to ſhine into them. And ſo 'tis one main end, and office of Chriſt, to bring into the World a ſupernatural Light of ſaving knowledge. *I am come a Light into the World, that whoſoever believes in me ſhould not abide in*
C *darkneſs*, Joh. xii. 46. That's one reaſon, ſaith *Tertullian*, why Chriſt was born in the night-time. *Myſtice factum eſt, ut* Chriſtus *in nocte naſceretur, lux veritatis futuræ ignorantiæ tenebris.* It ſhews us our condition before this light did graciouſly ſhine on us; we were all overſpread with the miſts of ignorance. Mankinde was naturally under a thick cloud of Darkneſs. Blackneſs of Darkneſs overwhelmed the World. *Behold, darkneſs covers the earth, and groſs darkneſs the People*, ſaith *Eſai*, Chap. lx. 2. Thus he deſcribes our condition, when Chriſt came amongſt us, *Eſai.* viii. 22. *He ſhall look upon the earth, and behold darkneſs, and dimneſs: they dwell in the land of darkneſs, and*
D *ſhadow of death.* Nay, St. *Paul* expreſſes it with a ſtronger Emphaſis, *Epheſ.* v. 8. *Eratis tenebræ, You were ſometime darkneſs*: not only dim, but dark; nay, darkneſs it ſelf.

Briefly, the World lay under a twofold darkneſs: and, to remove them both, our Saviour brought with him a double Light.

1. There was *tenebræ in medio*, external Darkneſs. Without Chriſt, no Light ſet up in the World to guide, or direct us; no natural means, that could ſhine upon us, to ſhew us our way. *They groped in the dark without light*, ſaith *Job*, chap. xii. 25. That which in
E part befel the *Jews* in their Captivity, was the univerſal Condition of the whole World by Nature. *We ſaw not our ſigns, there was not any Prophet, not one was there amongſt us, that underſtood any more.* The voyce of *Saul* (1 Sam. xxviii. 15.) is the voyce of all mankinde by nature; *God was departed from* us, *and never anſwered* us *by Dreams, or Viſions, or any Revelation.*

2. There were *tenebræ in oculo*, internal Darkneſs: and that's the more uncomely, and uncomfortable of the two. Not only

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only darkneſs; but blindneſs: and ſo Chriſt muſt not only give us light, but ſight. *The light of the Body is the Eye*, Mat. vi. 22. We muſt have light in the Eye as well as light in the Air. Without it, all outward light is to no purpoſe. The cleareſt Sun-ſhine is darkneſs to a blinde man. *Certè labor irritus eſt, & nullus effectus, offerre lumen cæco*; ſaith *Cyprian*.

In Supernatural Truths we want both our eyes; not only like *Pelagius*, born with one eye, but ſtark blinde. The moſt glorious Myſteries are to a natural man ſo many groſs Abſurdities. The promiſed Seed, the birth of this day, faith in *Abraham* believed it; but Nature in *Sarah* laughed at it. *Quod Aquila confitetur, negat Noctua.* Faith is like the Eagle, it beholds the Sun; Infidelity, like an Owl, it cannot endure it. The moſt ridiculous Fables are more credible, and probable to ſuch an one, then divine Myſteries. *Citiùs* Jupiter *Taurus, aut Cygnus creditur, quàm Deus homo.* Any fond Metamorphoſis ſooner believed then Chriſt's Incarnation. Indeed, theſe Myſteries are too glorious for Nature's eye-ſight. This Light is not to be looked upon, but by a light infuſed. The eye of Nature cannot fix upon it. *Our underſtanding*, ſaith *Solomon*, *'tis the Candle of God*: but the light of the Sun will put out a Candle. Supernatural Truths overwhelm reaſon. *Quorundam bonorum, ſicut & malorum, intolerabilis magnitudo eſt*, ſaith the Father; *ut ad ea percipienda tota divina gratia ſufficiat.* Chriſt muſt come, not only to enlighten our darkneſs; but to illuminate our blindneſs. He muſt *in agnitionem veritatis oculare*, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks. *He muſt open our underſtandings*, Luk. xxiv. 45. *We know*, ſaith St. *John*, *that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an underſtanding to know him.* That's the firſt property of light; Chriſt is *lux illuminans*, light, and underſtanding, *Dan.* v. 14.

2. A *ſecond* property, and benefit of light: Chriſt is a light, *lux purgans*. Light hath a purifying virtue; it brings pureneſs, and beauty upon all, that it ſhines upon. Darkneſs, and uncleanneſs, they go together. *Obſcæna tenebræ*, loathſome darkneſs. *Lutum, ſordes, tenebræ*; *Tully* heaps them together upon one dunghil. But light, that's amiable, and pure, and caſts a luſtre upon any thing. 'Tis the varniſh of the World, the verdure, and beauty of all the Creation. Before this light ſhined upon us in the face of Chriſt, the ſtate of Darkneſs, wherein we lay, was not only irkſome, but loathſome: we lay wallowing in a dark dungeon of all ſinful uncleanneſs; *David*'s Dungeon, full of deep mire, *Pſal.* lxix. 2. like *Jeremy*'s Dungeon, a very gulf of pollution. Thns *Paul* calls the defilement of ſin, *works of darkneſs*, Rom. xiii. 12; *the hidden things of darkneſs*, 1 Cor. iv. 5. *Bernard* tells us, when we fell in *Adam*, we fell not only upon an heap of ſtones, to maim, and bruiſe us; but into an heap of Mire, and Dirt, to defile, and pollute us: and ſo, ſaith He, Chriſt came not only to cure us, but to cleanſe us; not only to eaſe us of the pain, but to purge away the pollution. His ſhining diſpels all Miſts, and Fogs, that taint, and

A and annoy us. His Grace doth not only cleanſe us, but adorn us; not only purifie, but beautifie the Soul, it ſhines on. *Thy beauty was perfect through my comelineſs, that I put upon thee*, Exek. xv. 14. Light is the Soul's Beauty. Indeed, the beauty that light brings, far ſurpaſſes all other Beauty; no Veſture to the ſhining Garment. This tranſfiguration of our Souls, by Chriſt ſhining on us, makes us exceeding glorious, the reflection of his light upon us, *changes us from glory to glory*; 2 Cor. iii. 18. Light is the Goſpel's Beauty.

This makes the Goſpel far more glorious then the Law; there is more light in it; *Moſes* his face did ſhine, but his vail concealed it. Not
B only Chriſt's countenance did ſhine; but his garments were glorious. In the Law, there was *ſplendor ſub velamine*; in the Goſpel, here is *velamen in ſplendore*; his very Garments are glorious. *Moſes* his glory is done away by this glory of Chriſt. He doth *occidere*, *Elias* vaniſh, and diſappear at this Shunſhine. How beautiful doth the Church appear, cloth'ed with light? In earthly, and ſublunary ornaments, the malignant Church may go beyond her. The Whore of *Babylon*, ſhe is clothed with Purple, decked with Gold, and Pearls, and precious Stones; but one beam of light exceeds all theſe. The Church of Chriſt, ſhe is clothed with the Sun, treads upon the Moon, as her Cloth of State,
C crowned with the Stars, all ornaments of light: that's the Churches beauty. That's a *ſecond* Property, *lux purgans*; He is light and Beauty.

III. Chriſt is a Light; *lux exhilarans*: that's a *Third* property of light: it chears, and refreſhes other things, and puts vigour into them. The *Jews* had light, and gladneſs, Heſt. viii. 16. *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart*, Pſal. xcvii. 11. But darkneſs, 'tis horrid, and uncomfortable; it deads, and damps the Spirit of man; and makes it diſconſolate. Now the light of Chriſt's coming diſpels, and ſcatters this ſad darkneſs. *Zachary* calls the ſhining forth of this light, a *gracious viſitation*; *The day-ſpring from on high*
D *hath viſited us*. *Luk.* i. 78. And the proper ſubject of a merciful viſitation is miſery, and diſtreſs. St. *James* tells us, viſiting belongs to the Widow, and the Fatherleſs, in their affliction. Our Saviour tells us, it belongs to ſuch as are ſick, and in Priſon. Sad, and diſconſolate Souls, they are the object of viſitation.

It plainly reminds us of our woful condition without Chriſt. No friendleſs man ſo forſaken, and helpleſs; no forlorn *Lazarus* ſo rueful a ſpectacle; no enthralled bond-ſlave in ſuch a Dungeon of Captivity; no mournful Caitiff ſo overwhelmed with ſorrow as our Nature was, before Chriſt did viſit us. Ye may ſee what condition we were in, when
E God ſent Chriſt to us, *Luk.* iv. 18. There Chriſt reads the Tenour of his Commiſſion; *The Lord hath ſent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to deliver the Captives, to recover the blinde, to binde up the bruiſed*. Poor, and blinde, and bruiſed, broken-hearted! here is the plight we lay in. *No eye pitied thee, thou was caſt out in the open field, weltring in thy blood, and then I looked on thee*, Ezek. xvi. 5, 6, 8.

In particular, the ſhining forth of the Light diſpelled a threefold ſad, and ſorrowful Darkneſs. 1. There

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1. There is a Darkneſs of Miſery, and Affliction. *He hath ſet me in dark places, compaſſed me with affliction*, Lam. iii. 6. This Cloud of Darkneſs lay upon the World before Chriſt's coming. *Eſai.* viii. 22. When Chriſt comes into the World, He *ſhall look upon the Earth; and behold trouble, and darkneſs, and dimneſs of anguiſh, and they ſhall be driven to darkneſs.* But his preſence diſpels this darkneſs; He brings Tidings of Joy. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, will your God ſay.* The joy of thy Birth *ſhall be like the joy of Harveſt, and like the joy of men that divide the ſpoil*, Eſai. ix. 3. The joy of an Harveſt in the days of Peace; the joy of a Victory in the time of Wars. What Joy like theſe? After a terrible dead Winter to have a plentiful Harveſt; after a cruel, bloody War, to have a full Victory: 'tis the greateſt joy. Chriſt brings both with him; *He is a Sun, and a Shield*, ſaith *David*. *Sol Autumni*, the ripening Sun; and *Clypeus Belli*, the Shield of our Victory.

Argolici *Clypei, aut*, Phœbeæ *Lampadis inſtar.*

Now we come with our Sheaves in our Boſoms; and the ſpoils of our Victory upon our Shoulders. He is the God of comfort, our *Iſaac*, the Son of laughter, the true *Noah* of the Church that ſhall comfort us concerning all the trouble, and anguiſh of our Souls.

2. A *ſecond* ſad *Darkneſs* is the darkneſs of God's overcaſt angry countenance, that was over-clouded againſt us; and there was a dreadful Thunderbolt in that cloud to ſtrike us to deſtruction. *Thou hideſt thy face, and we are troubled*, ſaith *David*. The darkening of his countenance, 'tis the fading, and periſhing of the Creature; and, when it ſhines forth, they are renewed. *Cauſe thy face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved*, Pſal. lxxx. 19. 'Twas the dotage of *Valentinus*, that *Pluvia* was *Dei fletus*, and *fulgor lucis* was *Dei riſus*. When his imaginary God was merry, and laughed, that cauſed Sun-ſhine; and when he was ſullen, and ſhed tears, that brought Rain. *O riſum illuminatorem! O fletum rigatorem!* ſaith the Father wittily. 'Twas a part of his fond Hereſie: but it carries the Moral of our ſober Truth. The light of God's face, the ſmile of his Countenance doth enlighten and chear us. And that Chriſt works for us; he hath appeaſed the anger of his Father, cleared up that cloud, that hovered over our heads, and threatned our deſtruction. *In him he is well pleaſed* with us.

3. There is a *Darkneſs* of Death. 'Tis called *The land of darkneſs*, Job x. 22. *A land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf.* The State of death is called *Days of darkneſs*, Eccleſ. xi. 8. eſpecially eternal death; that's utter darkneſs, the *blackneſs of darkneſs*, the *power of darkneſs*; 'tis the territory of the *Prince of darkneſs*, the range, and walk of Satan. And that makes it diſmal. To be ſhut up in a dark Dungeon, 'tis grievous; and that Dungeon to be haunted with Devils, that's exceeding hideous. Now Chriſt, by his coming, as a moſt comfortable light, hath driven away this darkneſs; he hath deſtroyed death, ſubdued *him that had the power of death*, the *Prince of darkneſs*,

A *neſs*, Heb. ii. 14 The *appearing* of *Chriſt*, ſaith *Paul*, *hath aboliſhed death, and brought life, and immortality to light by the Goſpel*, 2 Tim. i. 10. He hath entred into the Dungeon of death, into this hold of Satan, cauſed a light to ſhine into the Priſon, Acts xii. 7. knocked off our bolts, made theſe chains of darkneſs to fall from us, led us through that Iron Gate, and ſet us at liberty.

Thus, every way, Chriſt is a moſt true, perfect light to us.

1. *Lux clariſſima, Veritas.* A Light enlightening our Underſtandings. *I am come a light into the world, that whoſoever believes in me ſhould not abide in darkneſs*, Joh. xii. 46.

B 2. He is *Lux puriſſima, Sanctitas.* A purifying, and beautifying Light, diſſolving the works of darkneſs, making us *Children of light*, that *we may ſhine as lights in an holy converſation.*

3. He is *Lux jucundiſſima, Amœnitas.* A moſt chearing and comforting Light, filling our hearts with Joy and Gladneſs.

That's the firſt Particular of the Text, the Quality, and Condition of the Benefit; 'tis *Light.* The

Second is, The Coming of this Light; the Approach, and offering of this Benefit, the tendering of it to us; *Is come.* And it carries with it a threefold Intimation.

C I. It Points out the Original of this Light, 'tis a foreign Light, not bred, or breaking forth out of the lower Region; 'tis not *relucentia Naturæ*, an irradiation of Nature, not kindled by humane Art, or any man's means, no luſtre of any creature. Darkneſs cannot be the fountain and original of Light. 'Tis a light ariſing, ſhining, coming from without. 'Tis ἐπιφᾶναι, and ἄνωθεν, *it comes from above, from the Father of Lights*, James i. 17. *Lux à primo lucido. Zachary* ſhews the original, *'Tis the day-ſpring from on high*, (Luke i. 78.) that doth graciouſly *viſit us. I am from above*, John xviii. 23. *Shall the mud wall boaſt it ſelf*, ſaith *Bernard*, *that it ſends forth that light*

D *which ſhines upon it?* The moſt clear pellucid body here below, 'tis but *receptive* of Light; 'tis not *emiſſive.* The Birth of this day, 'tis like the *dew of the morning*, Pſal. cx. 3. diſtilled from above; no miſt, or vapour exhaled from below. *I am the Bread of life that came down from heaven*, John vi. 51. *Manna de cœlo deplua*, the fatneſs of the clouds, not of the earth. *Cœli progenies. Righteouſneſs looking down* (nay, coming down) *from heaven*, Pſal. xcv. That's the original; *'Tis come.*

II. It ſhews the preventing freeneſs of this Light: 'Tis not ſaid, We firſt ſought it, or diſcovered it; but it brake in, and ſhined upon us,

E graciouſly, and freely. We never thought of it, or ſo much as wiſhed it; no *Prometheus*, that fetched it from heaven for us. As when *Moſes* came to the *Hebrews* in *Egypt*, they never looked for him, they wondered that God ſhould ſend any to viſit them. *Iſaiah* expreſſes it as a matter of wonderment, Chap. xlv. *The People that were in darkneſs, have ſeen a great light*; beyond all hope, or expectation. Thus we are deſcribed, *A People that ſate in darkneſs*, never ſtirred

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hand, or foot, to make towards it, ſwallowed up in an eternal night, as we deem'd, without hope of recovery. In other caſes, we can wiſh for Light, and wait for it, and haſten to it: but here we ſetled our ſelves, as they in *Egypt*, when the plague of Darkneſs was upon them. *No man ſtirred from his place*, and Light came in, and ſhined freely on us. *'Tis come.*

III. It points out the Time; 'Tis the actual, and preſent exhibition of it. This day was the *dawning of this light*, the riſing, and ſhining forth of this *Sun of righteouſneſs*. The Saints before had ſome tidings of this light, and ſome rays of it, *ſtricturas lucis*, as the Sun ſends ſome beams before it; but there was ſtill much darkneſs, and obſcurity. They had *crepuſculum Legis*, ſome glimmerings of Light under the Law, and *Gallicinium Prophetarum* (Thoſe ſame *Lucis aves*, the Prophets, they gave warning of it) St. *Peter* tells us, all their light, was but *the light of a Candle in a dark place*; but we ſee the bright morning Star; nay, the Body of this Sun, the full Globe of light, in it's perfect luſtre. Here is the happineſs of Chriſtianity, here is the glory of the Goſpel. We live in Times of actual light. *The night is paſt, the day is come*, ſaith St. *Paul*. The Sun is mounted above our Horizon; nay, 'tis in the midſt of Heaven, a glorious full light of ſaving knowledge. *Joſeph* ſpeaks no longer to his Brethren by an Interpreter, but face to face. The Chriſtian Church, ſaith *Bernard*, is not put off with Prophets, and Predictions, with Types, and Figures. *Mitte, per quem miſſurus es*, ſaith *Moſes*: let himſelf viſit us. *Non audio* Moſem, *impeditæ linguæ eſt*; let not *Moſes* ſpeak to us, he ſtammers. Eſaiæ *labia immunda ſunt*: Jeremias *puer eſt, neſcit loqui; viſiones, & ſomnia non recipio; figuras, & ænigmata nolo; ipſas quoque Angelorum faſtidio ſpecies, ipſe, quem loquuntur, ipſe loquatur*; let him ſpeak to us, whom they all ſpeak of.

There is one thing remaining in the exhibition of the Benefit; that's,

Thirdly, The Perſons to whom; the Place where this Light is expoſed: That's *The World*. Briefly, take the purpoſe of it in a Double expreſſion;

I. Here is *proximitas*, the nearneſs, and propinquity; nay, the immediate preſence of it.

II. Here is *generalitas*, the large, and unlimited circumference, and compaſs of it: 'Tis both *centrum*, and *circumferentia*; the Center of its preſence, and the Circumference of its motion.

I. It ſhews us the proximity of it; That's one privilege of the Goſpel. The Sun is not now in *Apogæo*; 'tis come not only towards us, but to us. 'Tis not in the height above, or in the depth below. No; the Goſpel offers us more grace; *the Word is nigh us*, Rom x. 8. *Poſuit Tabernaculum Soli*; God's Tabernacle is amongſt men, and he dwells amongſt us. The means of ſalvation are brought home to us, even to our doors. As, when the Sun ſhines in the World, it's but opening your window, and you let it in: 'Tis but opening your eyes, and

A and ye presently enjoy it. *Now we may see with our eyes, and our hands may handle the Word of Life*; *Evigilet fides, & præsto sunt res: cernuntur, tenentur, & videre volentium oculis ingeruntur*, saith St. *Augustine*. There have been Times (and they may return again upon us) when salvation did not knock at every man's door. *Eli*'s Times, when *The Word of the* LORD *was precious*, and rare, *there was no open Vision*, 1 Sam. iii. 1 *Amos* his Times, when *men shall wander from sea to sea, from the* North *to the* East, *run to and fro*, to seek the Word of God, and shall not find it: No; as yet Wisdom stands in our *Streets*, in *the places of concourse, in the opening of the Gates, in the midst of the City,*
B *she utters her words*, Prov. i. 20, 21. And then,

II. Take notice of the extent, and generality; 'tis *Come into the World*: a large comprehensive compass. And that's the *second* Privilege of the Gospel. Before, indeed, God let in some Light; but it was into an angle, and corner of the World, a spot of ground, a small compass. One little Nation had the comfort of this light, the *Jews* only. The Church before Christ, was but *Israel*'s Goshen, *Gideon*'s threshing-floor, *Solomons* Garden, *shut up, and enclosed*. Christ is not now *lucerna in domo*: as a Candle in a private house; *sed Sol in cælo*; as the Sun in the Firmament. Before, he was *lux modii*, a *Candle under a Bushel*;
C now he is *lux mundi*, nothing is hid from the light of it. Indeed, the Sun is made for the World, not for any streighter Region; all mens eyes may see, and behold it. *Lucem omnium oculi pariter possident* (saith St. *Augustine*) *sic & Deum: dicat dives, Deus meus es tu; dicat Pauper, Deus meus es tu: plus dives habet, minus pauper, sed argentum, non Deum*. Rich, and poor, all *kindreds of the earth* may have their share in him. *'Tis a small thing*, saith God to Christ, *that thou shouldest restore* Israel: *I will also give thee a light for the* Gentiles, *that thou mayest be my Salvation to the ends of the earth*, Esa. xlix. 6. The Gospel, saith our Saviour, 'tis *like a Net cast into the Sea*: not like an An-
D gle cast into *Jordan*, to catch *Jews* only; but a great Drag-net, spread upon the Waters, cast into the main Sea: Christ *is the Desire of all Nations*, Hag. ii. 7. *a Joy to all People*, Luk. ii. 10. *Now all Flesh shall see the Salvation of God*.

We have done with the first Branch of the Text, the Dignity of the Benefit, *Light is come into the World*. We proceed to the

Second, That's the unworthy Abuse, the great indignity, that the World, through Unbeleif, offers to this Benefit. *Men love darkness rather then Light*. They refuse the offer of this Light, and shut it out, embrace darkness, and abhor light.

E And 'tis not for nothing, that the Word is altered in the Text; He saith not, The World; but *Men love Darkness*, reject *Light*. It both specifies the Persons, for whom it was intended: no Creature in Heaven, or Earth, principally aimed at, but mankinde only; *For us men, and for our Salvation, he came down from Heaven*. He shone upon other parts of the World *radio obliquo*, they had but a glance of this light: He shines upon mankinde *radio directo*, upon primary intention.

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And then, as it ſpecifies the Perſons, ſo it ſhames, and upbraids them; that Men, poſſeſſed with underſtanding, and reaſon, ſhould ſo far degenerate, and become unreaſonable, as to prefer darkneſs above light. *The Sun riſes, and the Beaſts run* from it *to their Dens*; but *Man goes forth then*, ſaith *David*, and deſires to enjoy it. A

Naturally, Darkneſs is horrid to us, uncouth, and uncomfortable; 'Twas one of the great Plagues of *Egypt*, that they were ſhut up in darkneſs. 'Tis *David*'s great curſe, *Let their way be darkneſs*. On the contrary, Light is comfortable, and delightful to us. *Eccleſ.* xi. 7. *Truly, the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.* And as it is with bodily light, ſo (were we as we ſhould be) we would not endure to be ſhut up in Ignorance or led into Errour. By Nature, man is ζητητικὸν, καὶ ἱστορικὸν, a ſearching inquiſitive Creature, deſirous of Knowledge. We abhor to be hood-winked, and to be kept in Ignorance. B

Above all, Ignorance in matters of Religion is moſt ſhaming, and reproachful. As *Pariſienſis* obſerves well; to be Ignorant of ſome things, 'tis not a ſhame. Ask a man, if he know how to Carve, or make a Picture, he will anſwer without ſhame, *Neſcio*, he hath not the skill of it: but ask a man, if he knows how to live holily, how to worſhip, and ſerve God; that puts him to the bluſh, he is aſhamed to ſay, *Neſcio*. "An "unreaſonable Creature, ſaith he, knows how to live, *ſecundùm quod* "*decet ipſum*: and is it not a ſhame for a Man *vivere cum ignorantia* "*bene vivendi*? *Men love darkneſs*; it carries with it *aculeum exprobrationis*, 'tis a bitter exprobration. C

For the ſin it ſelf, the contempt of this bleſſed Light will further appear unto us, upon a double enquiry;

Firſt, Let us enquire into the heinouſneſs of this Sin.

Secondly, Into the Reaſons, and Inducements, that lead men to it.

Firſt, The heinouſneſs of this Sin will appear upon four aggravations, that the Text puts upon it.

I. The Perſons that refuſe it, *Men*, See before. D

II. The Poſitive affection, that they ſhew to it; 'Tis *dilexerunt*; they *loved darkneſs*, they delighted in it. And that makes it a wilful, perverſe, reſolute, affected Ignorance. They were in Darkneſs, and they *loved darkneſs*; they were ignorant, and they would be ignorant. To be in darkneſs, is pitiful, we count it a calamity; but to love darkneſs, and ignorance, to hate knowledge, and to put it far from us; that's an heinous impiety.

'Tis not ſaid, They approved Darkneſs, and diſapproved Light: No; 'tis poſſible, they may let it into their underſtandings, but they ſhut it out of their affections; it may prevail for conviction, but not for converſion. 'Tis not ſo much *cæcitas mentis*, as *cordis*, when our Heart turns from it; we may yield our Judgment to the Verity, but not our Affection to the Piety of Religion; *deny the power of it*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. *refuſe the love of it*, 2 Theſ. ii. 10. Our Saviour ſhews the perverſneſs of this ſin; *Nolumus hunc regnare*, *We will not have this man to rule over us*. They have no exception againſt his Perſon: *This Man*; they charge no fault E

upon

A upon him, they have no ſuſpicion of his government; 'tis not *Dominere*, or Tyranny, 'tis *regnare*, a gracious regiment: but it comes to *Nolumus*, they have no phanſies, or affection to him, and therefore they refuſe him. That's the firſt Aggravation; 'tis *Dilexerunt*, they *loved Darkneſs*. 'Tis not *privatio luminis*, but *averſio voluntatis*; as *Aquinas* expreſſes it. 'Tis the higheſt pitch of impiety, to ſay, *Nolumus intelligere*, Pſal. xxxv.

III. A *third Aggravation* of this contempt of Chriſt is in the compariſon μᾶλλον, *rather*; and that makes it more full, an act of choice, and election; 'Tis an undervaluing of Light, and a preferring of Darkneſs.

B *Prælatio unius ſine contumelia alterius non poteſt procedere*, ſaith *Tertullian*. It ſhews us *inſignem contumeliam infidelitatis*, the high Contumely, and Indignity that Chriſt and his Goſpel ſuffers from Infidelity. They, that know no better Condition, let them love Darkneſs; they know not what Light means. But when 'tis Elective, a preferring of darkneſs before light; when light, and darkneſs are both ſet before thee; the ugly, and loathſome face of Ignorance, and Unbelief, and the beautiful face of Truth, and Piety: then to turn ſcornfully from the knowledge of Chriſt, and to run thine head into the lap, and boſom of ignorance, 'tis an high Indignity. *Diabolum Deo præponit*, ſaith the

C Father; *comparationem videtur egiſſe, qui utrumque cognoverunt, & judicatum pronunciâſſe Diabolum meliorem.* It gives the Devil the preheminence before God himſelf. Thus *Chryſoſtom* brings in the Devil inſulting, that he carries it clear away from God, in the World's eſtimation. That's the *third Aggravation*; 'Tis *Elective*.

IV. A *fourth Aggravation* of that contempt of Chriſt is in the degrees of the object, *light*, and *darkneſs*, words of intenſion and extremity. Chriſt and his Goſpel are clear, perfect light, nothing but light: Infidelity, and living without Chriſt, 'tis groſs, palpable utter darkneſs. Had there been any abatement, or mixture in theſe two, a demurr in

D our choice had been more excuſeable; in ſome light there may be ſome darkneſs, as at day-break: and in ſome darkneſs there may be ſome light, as at the *ſhutting in of the evening*: Here is place for ſome poſſible compariſon. So in any man, be he never ſo enlightned, there may be ſome darkneſs of errour, or infirmity. *In optimis nonnihil eſt peſſimi*; and a wicked man may have ſome rayes of light. But Chriſt, and his Goſpel are all light, *flos lucis*; ſin and Ignorance of Chriſt, are *blackneſs of darkneſs*. They talk of a Proſpective that can diſcover dark ſpots in the Sun; but no eye, or obſervation, can diſcern the leaſt ſhadow of darkneſs in the *Sun of righteouſneſs*. *God is light, and*

E *in him is no darkneſs*. Infidelity is darkneſs, and in it is no light. Were this Sun in an Eclipſe, or under a cloud, haply we may miſtake it: but when it ſhines in the midſt of heaven, in its full ſtrength, (nay, *the day of* Chriſt *ſhall be as the light of ſeven days in one*, Iſai. xxx. 26.) to deſpiſe ſo glorious a light, to chooſe ſuch hideous darkneſs, 'tis out of meaſure ſinful. *Woe be to them that call ſuch light, darkneſs; and ſuch darkneſs, light*, Eſai. v. 20.

Ye

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Ye have ſeen the heynouſneſs of this Contempt: Let us enquire, A

Secondly, Into the Cauſes, and inducements, what may be the reaſons, that make men ſo unreaſonable, to love darkneſs, and to hate light. Briefly, take theſe four;

I. *Tenebræ connaturales*. We are born in darkneſs, and ſo we love to continue. Every thing likes beſt in its own element; and darkneſs, and ignorance, it is our original. "The day of our conception, ſaith "*Bernard*, 'tis like the day of the Creation, *veſperè, & manè*, the even-"ing, and the morning, it begins from darkneſs: *Ex utero ignorantiæ* "*in lucem virtutis expaveſcimus*; we are conceived in the womb of "ignorance, and we cry like children, and are afraid to be brought B "forth, and born into light. *Eò magis territi, quò magis illuminati*, ſaith *Fulgentius*. Light affrights us. The Religion we were born in, the Faith of our Fore-fathers: *Symmachus* pleads that for the Pagans, and the Papiſts joyn with him. They will have *fidem ex traduce*, by traduction, and tradition; and with *Joſeph* and *Mary*, they ſeek their Saviour amongſt their kindred, and old acquaintance; not in the Temple. *Fumus patrius igne alieno luculentior*. Owl-light ſerves beſt for ſuch Believers; they are acquainted with darkneſs, and will continue in it. That's the firſt; *Tenebræ connaturales*.

II. *They love Darkneſs*, hate Light; *Lux habet vim expergefactivam*; It hath a virtue, and power to awaken us. Darkneſs breeds drowſineſs, brings on ſleep. *Conticinium noctis*, all is huſhed then, we may reſt quietly. Sleep, and Darkneſs; Light, and Waking; they are σύγχρονα, connatural, and contemporary. Naturally, we are all ſick of a Lethargy, the *Spirit of ſlumber* is upon us, and we would not be diſeaſed. Now ignorance ſhuts the windows, draws the curtains, cloſes the eyes, lays the pillow of ſecurity under our heads, lulls us aſleep: but the Goſpel, that calls, and wakens us, as the Mariners did *Jonah*, *Why ſleepeſt thou, O Sleeper?* 'Tis the voyce of the Goſpel, *The night is paſt, the day is come, 'tis time to awaken*. Diligence watches in the D night; but 'tis ſhameful ſluggiſhneſs, not to waken in the day. Chriſt, as the morning-Star, awakened the Patriarchs; to us he is *Sol meridianus*, and ſhall we ſtill ſlumber? C

III. *Lux*, 'tis *provocativa laboris*: and that's a third exception they take againſt it. Light calls to labour. *The Sun riſes, and man goes forth to his work, and to his labour, until the Evening*. The Traveller walks whilſt 'tis light; the Labourer works whilſt 'tis light There are *twelve hours in the day*, wherein men walk, and labour, *Joh.* i. 11. Were light only to be looked on, 'twere another matter, 'twould not be ſo offenſive. To ſome there is *libido intellectûs*, an Itch of Curioſity to pry E into all Truths. We can acquaint our ſelves with the notional part of Religion, but not with the practick. Were *David*'s Root, and *Zachary*'s Branch to be only a Tree of Knowledge, our Teeth would water at it; but 'tis a Tree of Life, that makes us diſguſt it: Chriſtianity is not for a Frontlet 'twixt our eyes only, but as a Tablet on our hands: not a light to our eyes only for Knowledge, and Contemplation, but a

light

A light to our feet for guidance, and direction. O, the work of Faith, the labour of love, the travelling to Salvation, that ſays hard to us! O, 'tis a ſhame for us, to loyter out ſo glorious a light. *Why ſtand ye all the day idle? Dormire ſatiùs eſt, quàm iſto modo vigilare*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. The Patriarchs had their *Antilucanos labores*, wrought by Candle-light; while it was yet dark, with *Mary*, they ſought their Saviour.

And as light calls for labour, ſo this labour muſt be imployed in Works of light, not in deeds of darkneſs. Eſpecially *Feſtum lucis, operibus lucis celebrandum*: this Θεοφάνεια, this Feaſt muſt be celebrated with Works of light. *The night is paſt*, ſaith *Paul*, *the day is come, walk*
B *decently, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenneſs; not in chambering and wantonneſs.* The modern *Jews* give a ſtrange direction, that their People muſt drink ſo largely on their Feaſt of *Purim*, till they know no difference 'twixt *Aruch Haman*, and *Barach Mordecai*; Bleſſed *Mordecai*, and curſed *Haman*. Shall Chriſtians ſo far forget themſelves, till they know no odds 'twixt light and darkneſs; Chriſt, and *Belial*? Nay, as St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaks of the Heatheniſh revellings in the honour of their Gods: *Tutiùs irritantur Dii tales temperantiâ, quam placantur luxuriâ*: 'twere ſafer to prophane their Feaſts with temperance, and ſobriety; then prepoſterouſly to celebrate
C them with exceſs and luxury.

IV. Light is thus unwelcome to the World, 'tis *manifeſtiva ſordium*. Darkneſs veils and conceals: Light doth detect and diſcover our ſhame. That's the Grand Quarrel the World hath againſt it; therefore they hate the Light. *The World hates me, becauſe I teſtifie of it, that their works are nought*, Joh. vii 7. "Evil works, ſaith *Pariſienſis*, cloſe "up the eyes of the Soul, that it cannot ſee the light; *quaſi manibus* "*ſuis claudunt oculos, qui malis operibus delectantur*, they lay their "hands upon their eyes that they might not ſee. Dark Shops fit beſt for bad Wares. *Theſe ſpectacles are too true*, ſaid he, *for my falſe*
D *eyes*. Here is the Reaſon of all the malice the world raiſes againſt Religion. Φῶς 'tis ἐλεγκτικὸν, 'tis ſtill finding fault with us. *Tollamus juſtum, quia contrarius eſt nobis*: St. *Auguſtine* interprets it of Chriſt, and the rage of the world againſt Him. The Light of his Doctrine diſcovers, or the Holineſs of it reproves, and condemns us. Did Religion conſiſt only in ſome general truths, the world could away with it; but it meddles with our lives, moleſts, and haunts our Conſciences; that makes us abhor it. *Amant veritatem lucentem, oderunt redarguentem*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. Like *Jonah*, when the Sun grows hot, and *beats upon his head*, then he falls a chafing. *Quid igne lucente pulchrius? quid urente moleſtius?* ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. Like the Satyre in *Plutarch*, that, when he found Fire firſt, delighted in the ſight of it; but when he came near it, and felt it burn, and ſinge him, he flung it away, and quenched it preſently: or a People they tell us of under the Torrid Zone, that rage, and curſe the Sun, becauſe it ſcorches them.

One word of the laſt Particular in the Text; which is the Third, The heavy doom, and ſentence, that this Contempt of Chriſt brings

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brings upon the World, 'tis Their condemnation. And it carries with it the force, and ſtrength of a threefold demonſtration. A

Firſt, 'Tis *The condemnation*; 'tis *demonſtratio juſtitiæ condemnationis*, it makes their Sin unexcuſable, their damnation confeſſedly due, beyond all exception. Chriſtians, that will not lay hold on the offers of Grace, of all men, have no cauſe to murmure, or impute their damnation to God's ſecret purpoſe. They need not inquire into *Parcarum tabulas, ſed in proprias conſcientias*, and there read the Juſtice of their condemnation. St. *Auguſtine*'s Caſe concerning ſome is far different from the Caſe of ſuch men: *Quidam ideo non ſalvantur, non quia ipſi nolunt, ſed quia Deus non vult.* We ſhrink at that ſaying; but who pities him, that wilfully runs into his own deſtruction? They that live out of the Pale of the Church, are like men, that live in an unwholſom air, and far from Phyſicians, if they fall ſick, there is but one way with them. But *is there no Balm in* Gilead? *are there no Phyſitians there?* Make uſe of ſuch, or you periſh wilfully. Infidelity in a Chriſtian, 'tis a kind of αὐθοχειρία, a ſelf-murthering ſin; ſuch forſake their own mercies, *put them away, and judge themſelves unworthy of Eternal life*, Acts xiii. 46. *He that believes hath the witneſs in himſelf*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. So he, that will not believe, hath a ſelf condemning within himſelf, carries about him the Copy and Tranſcript of the ſentence of damnation. Hence we ſee Chriſt refers it to themſelves to judge, *Mat.* xxi. 40. what they deſerve for the refuſing of him; Ask them, *What will the Lord of the Vineyard do unto thoſe Husbandmen*, that *reject* his *Son*, when he is ſent unto them? They all anſwered, *He will miſerably deſtroy thoſe wicked men.* Their damnation is juſt, themſelves being Judges. That's the *firſt*; 'tis *demonſtratio Juſtitiæ condemnationis.* B C

Secondly, 'Tis Their Condemnation; 'tis *demonſtratio certitudinis condemnationis*, it makes their damnation unavoidable, their State irrecoverable, ſets them beyond all hope of pardon. *Perire neceſſe eſt, pœnitere nolentes*, ſaith *Bernard.* The wilful contempt of Chriſt, and his Goſpel, doth not only merit, but effectually ſeal up their condemnation. Other ſins are damnable; but obſtinate Infidelity, 'tis a ſin unpardonable. *If our Goſpel be ſtill hid*, ye will ſee no light in it; *'tis hid to them that periſh:* 'tis a ſhrewd ſign, ſuch men are Caſt-aways. Other ſins are *peccata contra Officium*; this, 'tis *peccatum contra remedium.* He that ſpils, or ſpits out the Medicine; Salvation it ſelf cannot ſave ſuch a man. 'Tis one thing to be condemned *in Foro legis*, to be caſt by the law, there lies a Writ of pardon iſſuable againſt that Sentence out of an higher Court; but to be condemned *in Foro Evangelii*, if the Tribunal of Chriſt, and the Goſpel caſt thee, wo be unto thee. The curſe of the law, 'tis by Chriſt reverſable: but St. *Paul* tells us of another curſe, the Curſe of the Goſpel; *If any man love not the Lord* Jeſus Chriſt, *let him be accurſed*; that's *Anathema, Maran-atha.* A curſe unavoidable; *Maran-atha, Dominus venit.* The Lord comes to confirm it. D E

He

A He hath ſent his ſervants, nay, his Son, to call thee, and then; *poſt filium, exercitus*, Mat. xxii. 7. He hath none to ſend now; but an Army of Souldiers to havock, and deſtroy thee. *Bring theſe mine enemies, that will not I ſhould reign over them, and ſlay them before me*, Luk. xix. 27. That's the *ſecond, Demonſtratio certitudinis condemnationis.*

Thirdly, 'Tis Their Condemnation; 'tis *demonſtratio gravitatis condemnationis*, it encreaſes the heavineſs of their condemnation, makes it unſupportable. Sins againſt the means of Grace are of greateſt provocations. God makes the Furnace of Hell ſeven times hotter for ſuch, then for other offenders, ſcourges them with Scorpions; they ſuck out B the dregs of the Cup of vengeance. He hath ſworn the deſtruction of unbelievers, Heb. iii. 18. And he will laugh, and mock at their deſtruction, *Prov.* i. 26. God's ſwearing, and God's laughing, and mocking, abode bitter diſpleaſure; heavy indignation.

'Twas the great Objection the Pagans made againſt Chriſtianity in the Primitive Times; That it brought extraordinary Calamities upon the World, Wars, and Plagues, and Famines, and Earthquakes: they imputed them all to the Chriſtian Religion. And ſeveral Fathers make their ſeveral Apologies. St. *Auguſtine* yields it, and grants it to them, ſays it was moſt juſt it ſhould be ſo; now the Goſpel hath been Preach- C ed, and that Chriſt is come, *Mundus factus eſt ſicut malus ſervus ſciens voluntatem Domini, & ideo gravius punitur*; the world, 'tis like the bad ſervant in the Goſpel, that knows his Maſter's Will, and ſo muſt be beaten with more ſtripes. *Gravius lex agnita, quam ignorata, condemnat*, ſaith *Fulgentius*. Nay, ſaith *Salvian*, *Reatus impii, pium nomen*; the very name of a Chriſtian ſhall add to their torment: they ſhall curſe their Chriſtendom, wiſh they had been *Turks*, or Pagans, never heard of the name of Chriſt, or the ſound of the Goſpel. Tribulation, and anguiſh upon the Soul of the Chriſtian firſt, and then of the Gentile. A wicked Chriſtian lies loweſt in Hell, undergoes the worſt of all D God's Judgements; becauſe he hath refuſed the beſt of all his Mercies. The ſweeteſt Wine makes the ſharpeſt Vinegar; and Mercy abuſed turns to fierceſt Indignation.

To cloſe, and wind up all, with reflection upon our ſelves;

The Text affords us a threefold view.

Firſt, See here the Happineſs of our Condition.

Secondly, See here the Evidence of our Conviction.

Thirdly, See here the Burthen of our Condemnation.

Firſt, View the Happineſs of our Condition; *In ſæculo illuminato*: we enjoy a chearful glorious Light; not the light of Nature only, or E of the Law, or of God's Example; but the moſt glorious Light of Chriſt ſhining in his Goſpel. *One day* of the *Son of man* is *more glorious then a thouſand other.*

This Light is fully exhibited, already come, made a perfect diſcovery of all ſaving Truth. *I know when the* Meſſias *is come, he will tell us all things*, Joh. iv. 25. We need not Pray with *Manoah, Lord, ſend the man again to us, to teach us more fully*: He *hath revealed the whole*

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We are within the Hemiſphere, where this light actually ſhines, born within the Tropick of the Church, where the Sun conſtantly moves.

We are too in *loco illuminato.* Our Valley of viſion, is like the Valley of *Ajalon*, where the Sun ſtands ſtill over us, and is daily culminant; As they report of *Rhodes*, where there is not a day goes over their heads, but the Sun ſhines clear upon them.

Secondly, View the Evidence of our Conviction, and take it in St. *Cyprians* words, *Hæc Summa delicti eſt, nolle agnoſcere, quem ignorare non potes*, Cypr. For us, not to ſee light, when it ſhines ſo clearly, what excuſe can there be? *Fidem in domo fidei non habere*, as the ſame Father ſpeaks: to live faithleſs in the houſe, and School of Faith. Let Heathens plead Ignorance; and Chriſtians, in darker Times, and Places, ſay, they have not heard of Him; Errour, and Wickedneſs amongſt us, is *Dæmonium meridianum*, a Devil at noon-day; like the Sin of *Abſalom, before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun.*

Thirdly, View here the Burthen of our Condemnation; if we rebel againſt the light, nothing remains but φοβερὰ ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως, a *fearful expectation of judgement.* See whither our unproficiency brings us. *Deſcendent in Gehennam, ut illic diſcant, quod hic credere noluerunt*, ſaith *Ambroſe.* And *in æternam pœnam ſerò credent, qui in æternam vitam credere noluerunt.* Eternal death ſhall lay hold on them, that would not lay hold on eternal life. We muſt go to learn that in Hell, we will not believe here. We, that ſleep out this day of Grace, ſhall hereafter awaken, but little to our eaſe. How uncomfortable will it be then to awaken, when our Sun is ſet? *Pariſienſis* terms ſuch, *Veſpertiliones fidei, poſt occaſum Solis evigilant*; Like Bats, that never look forth till the Sun be down. As St. *Auguſtine*, We ſhall be like thoſe, who *ex Lethargicis fiunt Phrenetici*; we ſhall awaken out of a Lethargie, and fall into a Phrenſie; out of a Lethargy of Errour into a Phrenſie of Horrour. *Nazianzene* ſhall put a concluſion to all, alluding to that place of St. *Paul*, *He ſhall come in flaming Fire, to take vengeance on them that obey not the Goſpel.* He came before, as a ſhining light, to call, and command them, but he was rejected: Hereafter he ſhall come in a flaming Fire to conſume and deſtroy them

Which that we may eſcape, let us deſire Almighty God, that, *In this our day, we may know the time of our Viſitation; that, walking here as Children of light in this preſent World, we may be meet partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light in the World to come: And that for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake; To whom with the Father*, &c.

ON

ON CHRISTMASS-DAY,

The Third Sermon.

I. Saint JOHN iii. 8.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.

AT the first hearing, and reading of these Words, you see the Text, and the Time, suit well together. The Time is the Celebration of our Saviours Incarnation, and Nativity, his taking upon him our Nature, the engaging himself in our Cause, for the subduing, and vanquishing the Enemies of our Salvation.

As on this day, our *David* descended into the Valley, to encounter *Goliah*, and hath got the Victory. *He hath spoyled Principalities, and Powers*, and all those *spiritual wickednesses* that had enthralled us. That's the Mercy of this day; and 'tis the matter of the Text: which is a brief, but yet a pregnant description of our Christian belief: 'tis *Evangelium abbreviatum*, an Abridgement of the Gospel. It presents unto us that *great Mystery of Godliness*; *God manifested in the Flesh*. A Secret unknown to the Sons of men by nature; but *God hath revealed it to us by his Spirit*.

St. *Augustine* tell us, that he had read in some Philosophers, That *The Word was in the beginning*. The God-head, and Divinity of *Christ* was not wholly unknown to them: but, he saith, he never read in any of their Books, That *Verbum caro factum est*, That *The Word was made Flesh, and suffered for us*. That was a *mystery hid from ages and generations*: 'tis a matter of pure Faith, and of supernatural revelation.

And this is the sum, and substance of the Text; and 'tis of a large compass, and comprehension. It begins at our Saviour's Incarnation;

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and reaches to his Paſſion, and even to his Reſurrection. Here are *Cunæ Nativitatis*, the Cradle, or Cratch of his Birth, and Nativity, and here is alſo *Currus triumphi*, the Chariot of his Victory, and Triumph; his ſubduing, and vanquiſhing the Devil, that great enemy of our Salvation. A

For the Words themſelves, we may reſolve them into theſe three Particulars:

Firſt, Here is the Myſtery of Chriſt's Incarnation; *The Son of God was manifeſted.*

Secondly, Here is the Work he undertakes, the Mercy, and the Benefit he accompliſhes for us; *He deſtroyes the Works of the Devil.* B

Thirdly, Here is the deſign, and intendment of this Work; He made it his buſineſs, ſet himſelf to do it; 'twas for this end, that he was incarnate; *For this purpoſe was the Son of God manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil.*

Come we to the

First Particular; The Myſtery of our Saviours Incarnation; *The Son of God was manifeſted.* And this points out the Author of this great work, to whom it belonged to vanquiſh Satan, and deſtroy his works. And it will appear to us more fully, in theſe three qualifications of it. C

Firſt, Is the Propriety.

Secondly, Is the Appropriation.

Thirdly, The Oeconomy, and diſpenſation, that was obſerved in it.

Firſt, Is the Propriety, to whom this work of ſubduing the Devil properly belongs; that's to God.

Secondly, Is the Appropriation, to which of the three Perſons in the God-head it is eſpecially appropriated, and aſcribed; 'tis to God the Son: and then,

Thirdly, Is the Oeconomy, and diſpenſation, or the manner of doing it (for ſo the Fathers call our Saviours Incarnation) 'tis here termed by St. *John*, *His Manifeſtation.* D

Firſt, The firſt thing conſiderable, is the Propriety, to whom this work of ſubduing the Devil, and deſtroying his works, properly belongeth; that's God. And God only was to do this work,

I. He only had right to do it; to him it pertained.

II. He only hath power to do it; he only could effect it. In him was both ἐξουσία, and δύναμις, both right, and authority; and then ſtrength and ſufficiency, to atchieve this Maſter-piece of deſtroying Satan's Kingdom from amongſt the Sons of men.

I. He only had right to do it; whether we conſider him either as the Judge, or as the Party wronged: E

1. He had the only right of deſtroying Satan's works, as the Judg to whom the Devil, and all the powers of darkneſs were obnoxious. The Devil hath withdrawn his obedience, but cannot avoid, or ſhake off his ſubjection to God's dominion. *All Powers, and Principalities, are ſubject unto him*, Epheſ. i. Thus we ſee, the Devils tremble at his

his appearance. They are fain to crave, and beg his ſufferance; they confeſs his power of puniſhing, and tormenting them.

2. God hath right to deſtroy theſe works of Satan, as *pars læſa*, as the party wronged. The miſchief indeed, that Satan doth, cannot reach to God; but yet the wrong, and injury, is principally God's. And ſo God's right of deſtroying Satan's works, 'tis *jus talionis*. He ſet himſelf to deface, and deſtroy the works of God; he maligned every print and footſtep of God, deſired to aboliſh it. Eſpecially his hatred, and ſpight, was at the choice piece of God's Workmanſhip; that, on which God had beſtowed moſt coſt, and ſtamped upon it his own holy Image, mankinde; that Satan ſought to deſtroy. Well; what ſaith St. *Paul? He that deſtroys the Temple of God, him will God deſtroy*; 1 Cor. iii. 17. He is requited in kinde. We may inſult over Satan, as *David* doth over his enemy, *Pſal.* ix. 6. *O thou enemy, deſtructions are come to a perpetual end, like as the Cities, that thou haſt deſtroyed.* The Devil, he ſet himſelf to deſtroy the works of God; 'tis juſt, and right, God ſhould *deſtroy the works of the Devil.* As God only had Right, ſo,

II. He only had Strength, and power, to effect this deſtruction of *Satan*'s works. 'Tis no eaſie thing to diſpoſſeſs Satan, and to vanquiſh him. 'Tis no petty Order (as the *Papiſts* make it) to be a true Exorciſt, and to ſubdue the Devil: our Saviour ſhews it to be an harder work; *Luke* xi. 21. He compares the Devil to a *ſtrong man armed, that keeps his Palace, his goods are in peace*; it muſt be a ſtronger than he, that ſhall come upon him, and overcome him, and take from him all his armour, wherein he truſted, and divide his ſpoils.

Try thy ſtrength but with one ſin, one work of the Devil, thou wilt finde it a work beyond thy ſtrength to caſt him out, and deſtroy him. As the Father in the Goſpel, that had his childe poſſeſſed of a Devil, confeſſed to Chriſt, *LORD, I brought him to thy Diſciples, but they could not do it.* Well, what ſaith our Saviour? *Bring him to me*; He caſt him out with power, and authority; *Juſſu & increpitu ejecit dæmonia*, ſaith *Tertullian*; *non ſuaſu, aut rogatu*; He removes out the Devil powerfully, mightily. He caſts out Devils *by the finger of God.* The leaſt touch of his ſtrength deſtroys Satan.

In this Caſe, it fares with us, as it did with the woman troubled *with a Bloody Iſſue*; no humane means could help her, or cure her: but the touch of the hem of Chriſt's garment recovered her preſently. See, there were two ſmall helps, in compare, did this great Work.

1. There was *minimum objecti*, the leaſt part of Chriſt, but the *hem of his garment*; and then,

2. There was *minimum actûs*, the leaſt touch of Faith. Omnipotency can work by the ſmalleſt means.

That's the firſt thing, the Propriety: it belongs to God.

Secondly, A ſecond thing conſiderable, is the Appropriation of this Work. 'Tis aſcribed to the ſecond Perſon in the glorious God-head; to the Son of God, or to God the Son. They are equivalent Expreſſions:

if

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if he be the Son of God, he is equal, and all one with God. *This is the true God, and Eternal Life*, ſaith Saint *John*, in the cloſure of this Epiſtle. For God to beget a Son, that is not God, were to beget, *non Filium, ſed Monſtrum*, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*. 'Twere monſtrous, and unnatural for a man not to beget a man, but ſome other creature; 'twere ſo for the Son of God, begotten of God, not to be perfect God. A

So then this work of deſtroying of Satan, 'tis the work of Chriſt, the Son of God. The Devils themſelves confeſs and acknowledge it; *Mark* i. 24 The Devil cryed out upon *Jeſus of Nazareth, Art thou come to deſtroy us? I know who thou art, The holy One of God. Utinam quomodo Dæmones judicem, ſic homines agnoſcerent Salvatorem.* Aug. *Conc. de* 5. Hæreſ. B

And that the Son of God ſhould undertake this work, there are two Congruities.

I. The firſt Congruity is grounded upon his Relation, in that he is the Son of God. And ſuitable to this there were two works of the Devil to be deſtroyed; and none ſo fit to do it, as the Son of God.

1. The firſt work of Satan, was to make us degenerate from our Original, and to become the Children of the Devil; that was our wofull condition. *John* viii. 44. Chriſt tells the *Jews* plainly, *Ye are of your Father, the Devil.* This work muſt be deſtroyed by our Spiritual Adoption; that reſcues us out of that curſed Family, and reduces us to a new Son-ſhip, makes us become the Children of God. Now, who ſo fit to make us Adopted Sons, as the natural Son of God? This *Paul* makes the end of Chriſt's Incarnation, *Gal.* iv. 5. *God ſent his Son, made of a Woman — that we might receive the adoption of Sons.* That's the firſt Work, the natural Son of God is fitteſt to make us adopted Sons. C

2. The ſecond Work of the Devil was the defacing, and deſtroying that holy Image of God, in which we were created, and ſo ſtamping upon our ſouls that blot, and blemiſh of the Devils ſimilitude. Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs, that's the Image of God, that the Devil deſtroyed in us. Wickedneſs, and Impiety, that's the Image of Satan, and that he printed upon us. Now, who ſo fit to deface the Image of Satan, and to repair the bleſſed Image of God upon our ſouls, as the Son of God, who is the *lively expreſs Image of God the Father?* That's the end of our Predeſtination, *That we ſhould be conformable unto the Image of his Son, that he may be the firſt-born among many Brethren*, Rom. viii. 29. D

That's the firſt Congruity, grounded upon our Saviour's Relation: in that he is the Son of God, and ſo *the Image, and Brightneſs of his Father's glory.* E

II. A ſecond Congruity, why Chriſt ſhould undertake this work, to deſtroy the works of the Devil, is grounded upon that ſpecial Attribute, which is aſcribed to the Son of God; that's the Attribute of Wiſdom. The Attribute of Power, that's appropriated to the Father, he is the Father Almighty: the Attribute of Love, and Goodneſs, that's appropriated to the third Perſon, God the Holy Ghoſt; he is the

A the Spirit of Love: and Wiſdom, that's attributed to God the Son; *Chriſt, he is the Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. *In him are all the treaſures of Wiſdom*, Coloſſ. ii. 3. And Wiſdom was that, which was ſeen in this work; the great Wiſdom, the hidden Wiſdom, the unſearchable Wiſdom of God. Satan, he wrought our ruine by craft and ſubtilty: he had not *potentiam cogendi*, but *aſtutiam fallendi*; he did not compell us, but he did beguile us. He choſe an inſtrument ſuitable to himſelf, by which he deſtroyed us, *Gen.* iii. 1. *The Serpent was more ſubtil than any Beaſt of the Field.* Well, did *craft* and *ſubtilty* ruin us? Here is *wiſdom* of God to reſtore us. *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs*, ſaith
B St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. iii. 19. he turns the craft of this old *Achitophel* into fooliſhneſs, outreaches Satan in all his policies. Here is our comfort, as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks; Surely, *aſtutus eſt Diabolus, ſed Chriſtus Dei ſapientia eſt.* The Devil is *crafty*; I, but Chriſt is the *wiſdom* of God.

That's the *ſecond*, the Appropriation; 'Tis *the Son of God*. We proceed,

Thirdly, To the third particular, that's the manner of effecting this work, the *Oeconomy*, and Diſpenſation obſerved in it; that's called here, *His manifeſtation*. St. *Paul* calls it, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*. And ſo the *Greek* Church honoured this Feſtival with that Term of
C Θεοφανία, the *appearance* of God. We may ſay truly, what the *Lycaonians* ſaid falſly, *Acts* xiv. 11. *God is come down to us in the likeneſs of Man.*

And this his Incarnation, 'tis called *a Manifeſtation*. 'Tis a ponderous, and a weighty word; it prevents divers Errours, that have been conceived concerning our Saviour.

I. 'Tis a Manifeſtation, that's *Præexiſtentis repreſentatio*. I note it againſt that curſed Hereſie revived by *Socinus*, that wickedly taught, that *Chriſt's Incarnation was his firſt Production, not only his Miſſion, or Manifeſtation.* Whereas Manifeſtation is the Repreſentation of that
D which was before, but did not appear before. By which falſe Doctrine he deſpoils our Saviour of his Deity, making him only a Titular, and Nuncupative God, a God by Conceſſion, and grant, not by Nature, and eternal generation. What ſaith Chriſt of himſelf? *Before* Abraham *was, I am.* And again, *John* xvii. *Glorifie me, O Father, with the glory which I had with thee, before the World was. His goings forth were from everlaſting*, ſaith the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. v. St. *Paul* teaches us an Orthodox Confeſſion, *Rom.* ix. *Of whom, as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever.* Amen.

II. Chriſt's Incarnation, 'tis his Manifeſtation, that is, *inviſibilis*
E *apparitio*, the appearing of him, who before was inviſible. And this I note againſt the *Arrians*; who to ſhew ſome difference 'twixt the Nature of God the Father, and of God the Son, Heretically taught, that *God the Father was of a ſubſtance inviſible*; but that *God the Son, even before his Incarnation, and his divine Nature, was always viſible, and to be beheld by a created Eye*; whereas his Godhead dwelt in the Light, that no Eye could attain unto. *Nemo nos fallat*

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fallat eorum, qui dicunt invisibilem Patrem, & visibilem Filium, saith St. *Augustine*. St. *Paul*, magnifying the Mercy of Christ in his Conversion, concludes with this Doxology, 1 *Tim.* i. *Now, to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, only wise God, be honour, and glory, for ever, and ever.* Amen.

III. Christ's Incarnation is his Manifestation, that's *prænunciati exhibitio*, he is now really and actually exhibited to the Sons of men: before he was promised only, but now that promise is fully performed to us. I note it against the blindness, and obstinacy of the *Jews*, that will not confess Christ is come in the flesh, but still expect and wait for his appearance. Thus that Speech of Christ is fulfilled in them, *The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not.* A strange darkness, that, when Light is present, doth still continue darkness. Surely, that darkness is blindness, that's their misery. But 'tis our happiness that we enjoy this blessed Manifestation. *Spectare jucundius, quàm expectare.* The *Patriarchs* expected him, but we enjoy him. *Let the hearts of those rejoyce, that seek the Lord. Abraham* rejoyced at the fore-sight of this Day: his, and all the *Patriarchs* joy, was but *gaudium quærentium*, but our joy is *gaudium invenientium*; we have found what they sought. O, let us acknowledge him. Let us take up *Philip*'s joyfull Profession; Joh. i. *We have found him, of whom* Moses *in the Law, and the Prophets did write.* And then let's add *Nathaneel*'s Adoration of him, *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of* God, *thou art the King of* Israel: And then let's renew *David*'s Benediction, *Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.*

For better understanding this great Mystery of our Religion, that the Son of God by his Incarnation is made manifest, we must know, that it was a gracious Manifestation, rather then a glorious. His divine Nature appeared *in specie aliena, non in propria*, under the veil of his Humanity, not in the bright beams of his Divinity; that was made manifest by a Personal Union to his humane Nature: We saw that Flesh, in which the *God-head dwelt bodily. Vidimus indumentum, non indutum*; as we say, we see a Man, when yet we see only his garment, in which he is, and with which he is cloathed. The beams of his Divinity did break forth in his heavenly Sermons, in his transcendent Holiness, in his gracious Speeches, in his wonderfull Works; all exceeding the Ability of any Creature; all testifying that he was the Son of God. These made St. *John* say, *Chap.* i. *We beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace, and truth.*

And this degree, and temper of his Manifestation was thus ordered, and proportioned, for these considerations.

1. This Manifestation under the veil of his Flesh was fitted *pro captu nostro*, for our capacity, we could not otherwise have beheld him. The incomprehensible splendour of his God-head, and Divinity would have overwhelmed our understandings, and swallowed them up. His Flesh concealed him; true, and yet it presented him, made him the fitter for us to look upon; our weak eyes could not other-

A otherwiſe behold him. As *Moſes* his vail, 'twas an help, not an hinderance to the People's converſe with him, they could not behold the glory of his countenance; ſuch was the veil of Chriſt's humanity. *Noli contemnere nubem carnis; nube tegitur, non ut obſcuretur Sol, ſed ut temperetur*; Aug. We can fix our eyes upon the Sun, when 'tis under a cloud; we cannot do ſo, when 'tis in its full ſplendour.

2. This Manifeſtation was under the veil of the Fleſh, *pro modulo fidei*, to make way for the exerciſe of Faith; and Faith was to have a principal part in the work of our Redemption. And the property of that is to believe that, which we ſee not. And therefore, that
B our Faith might have what to believe, he concealed his divinity under the veil of his humanity; as 'tis ſaid of *Thomas, Tetigit hominem, credidit Deum*: he touch'd, and beheld the fleſh of Chriſt, but his faith, that believed his God-head, and Divinity. Notwithſtanding this Manifeſtation in the fleſh, there muſt be a Revelation to our Faith, that may make us confeſs with *Peter, Thou art the Son of the living God.*

3. His Manifeſtation was under the covert, and veil of the fleſh, *pro modo victoriæ*, as the fitteſt way to vanquiſh, and conquer, and deſtroy the Devil.

1. It was a fit way to requite the Devil. He wrought our
C ruin by a counterfeit Incarnation, appearing to our firſt Parents in another habit; and Chriſt, he works Satan's ruin by a real Incarnation.

2. This was done, to bring on the Devil to this encounter, by which he might be deſtroyed. He durſt not have aſſaulted our Saviour, appearing in his glory. But there was *eſca humanitatis*, and *hamus divinitatis*; the Hook of Chriſt's Divinity was bayted with the Fleſh of his Humanity; and ſo this great *Leviathan* was taken, and deſtroyed. As *Goliah*, when he ſaw *David* coming towards him ſo poorly provided, naked, and unarmed, he made no queſtion he
D ſhould ſoon over-maſter him: ſo the Devil looking upon our Saviour's Humanity, but not perceiving his God-head, and Divinity, entred the liſts, and by him was vanquiſhed.

Come we to the

Second Particular of the Text: that's the Work, and Employment of our Incarnate Saviour. What's that? the Text tells us, it was *to deſtroy the works of the devil.*

The fruit, and benefit, of our Saviour's Incarnation hath other expreſſions in Scripture. *He came to ſeek, and to ſave that, which was loſt*, Matth. xviii. 11. *He came into the World to ſave ſinners*, 1 Tim.
E i. 15. *I am come*, ſaith Chriſt, *that they might have life*, John x. 10. *I am the Bread of Life, that came down from Heaven, and gives Life unto the World*, John vi. 41. Theſe, and many more than theſe, are the ſweet expreſſions that the Scripture makes of our Saviours Incarnation. But they are all comprehended in this of St. *John*, it was *to deſtroy the works of the Devil.*

And that affords us this Obſervation; *That 'tis Chriſt's Office and*

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employment, *to deſtroy the works of the devil.* Here are two things obſervable. A

Firſt, What's that Chriſt oppoſes? they are *the works of the devil.*

Secondly, What's the oppoſition he makes againſt them? 'Tis *To deſtroy them.*

Firſt, What's that, which Chriſt ſets himſelf againſt, and oppoſes? they are *the works of the devil.* So then, in general, the Work, for which Chriſt came into the World, tis a ſpiritual work, to oppoſe *ſpiritual wickedneſſes*, as St. *Paul* calls them. He comes to deſtroy the Kingdom of *Satan*; not to deſtroy the Kingdoms of the Earth, and to inveſt the Saints in a Worldly Dominion: as the *Pope*'s Canoniſts, B and many now dream. I; and they walk in their dream, and go ſtiffly about it; and ſo turn Chriſtianity into a Worldly Policy. 'Twas the erroneous conceit of the *Jews*, they promiſed to themſelves an outward ſecular Kingdom of the *Meſſias*; no, our Saviour tells them, *the Kingdom of God is within them:* in their ſouls, and ſpirits, *Luke* xvii. 21. The Goſpel is converſant, *in criminibus, non in poſſeſſionibus*; in mortifying of ſins, not in invading of Poſſeſſions, as *Bernard* ſpeaks. And *Chryſoſtom* makes a great difference 'twixt earthly Kingdoms, and the Kingdom of the Goſpel. Secular Kings, they have to do with the Bodies of men: the Miniſters of Chriſt's Kingdom, they are em- C ployed about the Souls of men; they uſe *bodily* weapons, we *ſpiritual*; they fight againſt *Barbarians*, we againſt *Devils.*

For better underſtanding this Object, which Chriſt comes to deſtroy, take notice of it in two particulars.

I. Let's ſee the extenſion of the matter: 'tis *opera Diaboli, the works of the Devil.*

II. Obſerve the limitation; this deſtruction that Chriſt works, 'tis confined to *the works of the Devil.*

I. See the Extenſion of the Object, that Chriſt comes to deſtroy; 'Tis *The Works of the Devil.* The Enquiry then muſt be, D what's meant by *the Works of the Devil?* The Scripture reduces it to two heads:

1. Sin, that's the work of the Devil.

2. Death, that's the work of the Devil; and Chriſt deſtroyes both. For *death*, St. *Paul* makes that one main end of Chriſt's Incarnation: *Hebr.* ii. 14. *He himſelf took part of Fleſh, and Blood, that through death, he might deſtroy him, that had the power of death, that is the Devil.* But the Text aims at that other work of the Devil, *ſin*; To that therefore I will confine my diſcourſe.

So then, the Obſervation is briefly thus much; *Sin, 'tis the work of* E *the Devil.* And this expreſſion of the Apoſtle's, hath a three-fold intendment in it. St. *John* calls ſin, *The work of the Devil.*

I. 'Tis a ſpeech *juſtæ imputationis*, the Devil is juſtly chargeable with the guilt of our ſins.

II. 'Tis a ſpeech *magnæ deteſtationis*, it lays an heavy aggravation, and odiouſneſs upon ſin; 'tis a work of the Devil.

III. 'Tis

A III. 'Tis a ſpeech *gratioſæ commiſerationis*, it imports pity, and commiſeration towards mankinde.

First, 'Tis a ſpeech of juſt imputation; the Devil is chargeable with the guilt of our ſins;

1. Sin, 'tis *opus diaboli*; 'tis no work of God then; far be that from the thought of any man: he made man upright, and innocent. The Text frees him from this imputation. *Deus non eſt autor, cujus eſt ultor*; ſaith *Fulgentius*. Sure, he is not the author of that, of which he is the deſtroyer. Let no man ſay, that *God tempts him to ſin*. 'Tis a ſtrange perverſneſs in ſome men, if there be any good in them, B they aſcribe it to themſelves; but that, which is evil in them, they impute it to God.

2. Sin, 'tis *opus diaboli*; it muſt be cautiouſly underſtood, and with good advice. The *Manichees* put an Heretical ſenſe upon it; as if the ſins we commit, were not the acts and iſſues of our own free-will; and ſo, no way chargeable upon us: but that they are actions of another nature in us; that the Prince of darkneſs produced them, not we our ſelves. And *Auguſtine* confeſſes, that, while he was entangled in that error, it pleaſed him well; that the ſins, which he committed, were not his own ſins; but aroſe from ſomething in him, C which was no part of him.

3. And as they believe it Heretically, ſo do many in a ſenſual manner prophanely, and ſhift off their ſins, and blame the Devil for them, not themſelves. O, the Devil ow'd me a ſpight, now he hath paid me, he brought me to this evil. And the Devil, ſaith *Auguſtine*, gives them good leave to do ſo. *Gaudet diabolus, quando in eum peccata noſtra rejicimus*; *The Devil*, ſaith he, *is glad, when we ſay, he made us to ſin. Qui hoc dicit, non ſe accuſat, non confitetur peccatum.* He, that ſaith ſo, will never repent truly of his ſin We learned this ſhift of our mother *Eve*; ſhe tranſlates her ſin upon the devil: *The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* D

4. How then are our *ſins* the *devils works?* 'tis not by a total exemption of us, and tranſlation of our ſins upon him, but by a joint communication in the guilt of them. Indeed, if *Satan*'s temptations be not entertained by us, then they are *Satan*'s ſins only, and but our trials; but, if we admit of them, and ſuffer his fiery darts to kindle upon us, then they are his works, and ours alſo. Both *ſuaſor*, and *actor*, the tempter and the actor are both guilty. As the *Lawyers* ſay, If one ſhall ſet a Tree in another man's ground, if the Tree take root, *cedit ſolo*, it belongs to the owner of the ſoil; but, if it E take not root, 'tis his, that ſet it there: 'tis ſo with Satan's temptations; if we reject them, they are his *ſins*; if we conſent to them, they are his, and ours too.

'Tis a true Rule in Divinity, *Diabolus pater, & concupiſcentia mater peccati*; the Devil is the father, but our Corruption, 'tis the mother of ſin. And the Devil cannot raviſh our ſouls, but only allure them. *Suggerit diabolus, ſed non ingerit*; Bernard. He may perſwade

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us, but cannot enforce us. 'Tis a true Speech of *Bernard*, *Tibi imputa, si quid pateris ab eo, qui sine te potest nihil facere.* Blame thy self, if the Devil brings thee to do that, which he cannot bring thee to, without thy will. A

So then the Devil, he is the Father of sin, and it bears his name. 'Tis a work of the Devil.

1. He is the first Auctor, and Inventor of sin. As they, that are the first Inventors of any thing, they carry away the name of it, though others imitate it, and do the same thing. We may say of every sin what Christ saith of Lying; *The Devil is a Lyar, and the Father of it. Non omnis, qui mentitur, pater mendacii est*, saith *Augustine*. *Sed qui à seipso habet*; such a Father of sin is the devil: he was tempted by none, imitated none, but sinned of himself; he was the first of all the creatures, that committed sin. B

2. As he is the Inventor, and first Beginner, so he is the Tempter, and Misleader into sin. Our natural corruption, by which we are prone to sin, 'tis *Virus antiqui serpentis*; Cyprian. 'Tis that Venom, and Poyson, which the Devil instilled into our first Parents. Our actual sins, he hath an hand in them, he is prompting, and suggesting his wicked motions. Not only those sins, which in a special manner are called diabolical, but even our more humane transgressions, are Satan's works. Pride, and vain-glory in *David*'s numbering the People, 'twas the Devil's work, *he stood up, and provoked* David *to it*; 1 Chr. xxi. 1. *Peter*'s carnal counsel, which he gave to Christ, to save himself from death, Christ espyed the Devil in it: *Get thee behinde me, Satan*; Matth. 16. 23. *Ananias*, and *Sapphira*'s sacrilege, and robbing of God in things dedicated to him, 'twas Satan's work: *Why hath Satan filled your hearts?* saith St. *Peter* to them; *Acts* v. 3. *Judas* his treachery in betraying of Christ, 'twas Satan's work: *Then entered the Devil into* Judas, *Luke* xxii. 3. In all sins, St. *Paul* tells us, *The devil works effectually in the children of disobedience.* And our Saviour tells the *Jews*, *They do the lusts of their Father the Devil*; John viii. 44. C D

That's the first, it's a Speech of just imputation.

II. Our sins are called the *Devil's works*; 'tis a Speech *magnæ detestationis*, 'tis a Speech implying loathing, and detestation. It puts upon our sinning a term of horrour, and abomination. To call our sins the *works of the Devil*, 'tis to flesh and blood, *Vocabulum ingentis significationis*, as *Luther* speaks: it sounds very harshly in a natural man's ears. We would be thought to have nothing to do with the Devil, nor that he hath any thing to do with us. We can live in sin, and yet defie the Devil, and all his works. We can make more moderate constructions of our sins, and call them, *the frailties of the flesh, the infirmities of our nature*, such as the best are subject unto. Well, this Scripture represents our sins to us in a more ghastly appearance; it will teach us to judge of sin, as God judges of it, and to see the Devil in it. What saith St. *John* in the beginning of the *Verse? He, that commits sin, is of the Devil*, is the Devils drudge; Satan works in him, and by him. E

And

A And then, Is ſin *the Devil's work? Non tantùm cave, ſed horre,* ſaith *Bernard*; it will teach us, not only to ſhun it, but to deteſt, and abhor it. As they ſay of ſome meats; if we ſaw the dreſſing, we would loath the eating of them: ſo, did we ſeriouſly conſider, that in all our ſins, the Devil hath an hand in them, that unclean ſpirit, that malicious ſpirit, that deſtroying ſpirit, it would make us flee from them, as from a Serpent, and as the matter of greateſt horrour, and deteſtation.

That's the ſecond, 'tis a Speech of deteſtation.

III. Sin, 'tis the *Devils work*, 'tis a Speech *gratioſæ commiſerationis*; it implies that pity, and commiſeration in God, which moved
B him to undertake this work for us. Our fall from God, 'twas the Devil's work, and contrivance; he plotted our ruin, and beguiled us through his ſubtilty. The vengeance ſhall fall upon him; our nature, through the Grace of God, ſhall be reſcued, and relieved. That's one reaſon which Divines give, why Chriſt redeemed not the *Devils*, but *Man-kinde*, becauſe he ſinned of Malice, ſubverted us out of Envy; we fell by Temptation, and ſo God accounted us more capable of remiſſion. *Minùs homo in conſentiendo, quàm Diabolus mala ſuadendo, peccavit.* Aug. I do but touch it.

I have done with the firſt, the Extenſion of the Object.

C Come we,

Secondly, To the Limitation; that, which Chriſt came to deſtroy, is *the works of the Devil*, thoſe, and only thoſe. The works of God, thoſe Chriſt came not to deſtroy, but to preſerve, and reſtore, to improve, and better them. *Eſai.* lviii. 12. *He ſhall be called the Repairer of the breach, the Reſtorer of paths to dwell in*; the Souls of Men, to recover them; the Lives of men; he came not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them, *Luke* ix. 56. The government of men in Peace, and quietneſs, 'tis the work of the God of Order, and Peace, and Chriſt comes to eſtabliſh it; *The encreaſe of his government is peace*, Eſai. ix. 7.

D It muſt teach all undertakers of works of deſtruction, to carry a ſteddy hand in ſo perillous a work. They had need of three *Caveats*:

1. The firſt *Caveat*; look to thy Warrant and Authority. Every man is not to be a deſtroyer, even of thoſe things, that deſerve to be deſtroyed. *Jehu* was anointed to deſtroy *Baal* out of *Iſrael*. *Et meritum criminis, & ordo poteſtatis*, ſaith *Auguſtine*, are both neceſſary: the thing muſt deſerve to be deſtroyed, and thou muſt have a Warrant to do it.

2. A ſecond *Caveat*; take heed you miſtake not a work of God, for a work of the Devil. Be ſure, that, which thou wouldeſt deſtroy,
E be a work of the Devil. And then, if thy warrant will authoriſe that, deſtroy it in God's name, and ſpare it not; but, if it be a work of God, take heed of deſtroying it. In this Caſe, thou mayeſt be miſtaken, as *Joſeph* was; ſuppoſing that to be an Adulterous brood, which was the Conception of the Holy Ghoſt. We may a little invert the ſpeech of St *Paul*; *If thou deſtroy that, which God hath builded, thou makeſt thy ſelf a tranſgreſſour.*

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In Reformations, deſtroy, *opus Diaboli*; I, but preſerve *opus Dei*: Government, and Sovereignty, 'tis the work of God, his great Ordinance; *the Powers that are, are ordained of God*; Rom. xiii. 1. *Deſtroy it not, there is a bleſſing in it*, Eſai. lxv. 8. What were this, to pull down Sovereignty? but to do as the *Jews* did, crie out, *Save Barabbas, and deſtroy Jeſus.* 'Tis the Title of that Pſalm, which is the *Kingly-Pſalm*; Pſal. lxxv. the Pſalm for Government; *David* ſtiles it, *Nè Perdas*; Deſtroy it not. And that will bring in the Wiſe man's *Caveat*; Prov. xxx. 31. *Nè inſurrexeris*; Encounter it not: and that will reminde us of St. *Paul*'s charge, *Nè reſiſtas*; Oppoſe it not: and that will inform us of *Solomon*'s Warning; *Nè maledicas*; Revile it not.

We know what Chriſt ſaith of their blaſphemy, that ſaid, *He caſts out Devils by Beelzebub*; accounting the works of God to be the works of the Devil; and 'tis no leſs a Blaſphemy, to call the works of the Devil, the works of God. Let them take heed of both theſe practiſes.

3. A third *Caveat* is, when theſe two works meet in one; the work of God, and the work of the Devil: then ſeparate the precious from the vile, diſcern, and diſtinguiſh them. As in a ſinner there is both the work of God, and the work of the Devil; his ſin, that's a work of the Devil, deſtroy that; but his nature, that's a work of God, do good to that; hate his ſin, but love his perſon. *Ama hominem, non errorem*; *ama quod Deus fecit, non quod Diabolus fecit. Auguſtine* tells us, our deſtroying of ſins ſhould not be like the deſtroying of the *Sodomites*; where Perſons were deſtroyed: but like the deſtroying of the *Ninevites*; where their *ſins* were deſtroyed, but themſelves ſaved. *Tantum de objecto.*

Come we,

Secondly, To the Oppoſition, which Chriſt makes againſt the works of the Devil, 'tis called a *deſtroying*. 'Tis a full word, of great vehemency, and intention. Chriſt came not only to abate the power of Satan, and to bring him under, as *Saul* did with *Agag*; or the *Iſraelites* did with the *Canaanites*: ſpared their lives, but ſubdued them only, and made them Tributaries. 'Tis charged on them as a ſin; *Neither deſtroyed they the Heathen, as the LORD commanded them*; Pſal cvi. 34. No; ſin and Satan are to be devoted to utter deſtruction. Not only reſtrain ſin, but root it out, and deſtroy it. And that we may do this, we muſt beget in us a deſtroying affection. What's that? Hatred, that's the affection that works deſtruction. Wouldſt thou deſtroy thy ſin? then hate thy ſin. Anger is not enough: that may conſiſt with Love, and be overcome of Pity; but Hatred is an affection tending to deſtruction. And we muſt nouriſh in our hearts a double Hatred:

I. Is, *Odium inimicitiæ*, the hatred of Enmity, that muſt be againſt the Devil, hate him with a perfect hatred.

II. Is, *Odium abominationis*, hatred of Abomination, that muſt be againſt ſin, the work of the Devil. Theſe two, the hatred of Enmity againſt

A againſt Satan, and the hatred of loathing, and antipathy againſt ſin: that will make us imitate this work of Chriſt, in deſtroying of ſin. And this Chriſt doth in three degrees, till ſin be utterly deſtroyed.

1. 'The firſt degree is, *Nè damnet*. He deſtroys the condemning power of *ſin*, by purchaſing the pardon of *ſin*, and conferrs this upon us in our juſtification.

2. The ſecond degree, is *Nè regnet*. He deſtroys the dominion, and reigning power of ſin, by inſpirations of his grace, thereby mortifying *ſin* in our ſanctification.

3. The third degree, *Nè ſit*. He deſtroys the very being of *ſin*;
B roots up the bitter root of ſin, by his final, and finiſhing grace in our glorification.

Thus do thou;

1. Sue for the pardon of *ſin*.
2. Strive againſt the power of *ſin*.
3. Long for the final aboliſhing of *ſin*.

The laſt part of the Text remains; that's,

Thirdly, The Deſign, and Intendment of this Work; *For this purpoſe*.

And here take notice of three things:

C *Firſt*, That it was his intention.

Secondly, It was his primary intention.

Thirdly, That it is his effectual, and reſolute intention.

Firſt, This deſtroying of ſin, and Satan, and ſo the reſcuing of us from both, 'twas his intention; he aimed at it, and intended it: He did not do it *obiter*, or by the by, as *David*, that took occaſion to encounter *Goliah*, but he came to the Army upon another reaſon: Nor did he ſave us, as the good *Samaritan*, that travelled about his own buſineſs, and chanced on the wounded man, and took care of him. No, it was Chriſt's aim, and errand: *He came to ſeek, and to ſave*
D *that which was loſt*. We may hit upon that which we never look for; but ſeeking is a work of intendment, and enquiry. Our deliverance was graciouſly intended. *For this cauſe was I born, to this end came I into the World*. He fore-ſaw our fall, and pitied our miſery, and forecaſts our recovery: His eternal thoughts of Grace and Mercy, were employed about us. 'Twas his intention.

Secondly, This work was his primary intention. The main end of his coming into the World, 'twas to deſtroy Satan, and to free us from his bondage, and captivity.

Other ends have been thought on by divers: ſome falſe, and er-
E roneous; others nice, and curious; others true, but inferiour to this, to reſcue us from the thraldom of Satan.

I. The end that *Origen* imagined, is falſe: That, *Chriſt came to ſave even the* Devils *themſelves, and that they ſhall again be reſtored by* Chriſt *to their primitive happineſs*. No, Satan, and all his works are deſtined to deſtruction. Hell, 'tis prepared for *the Devil and his Angels. He took not upon him the nature of Angels*; whether good

or

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or bad: and that nature, which was not assumed, shall not be redeemed.

II. That end, which some *School-men* imagine, is but nice, and curious: That, *Though man had not sinned, yet there was another end of Christ's Incarnation, the perfection of the Universe; that Christ should have united to himself a Creature, so communicating himself in the noblest way to us; which is Hypostatical Union.* A groundless Conceit, without warrant of Scripture. What saith St. *Augustine? Tolle morbos, tolle vulnera; quid opus est Medico?* If there were no sickness, what need were there of a Physician? *He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

III. That end which others assign, 'tis inferiour, and secondary to this in the Text: which is, *Though not for the redemption of the evil, yet for the confirmation of the good Angels.* 'Tis a likely, and a seemly Truth; the grace of Confirmation flowing from Christ, as well as the grace of Restitution. But yet the main end was Man's delivery from the power of Satan. The Angels themselves acknowledge our Title in Christ to be the principal; they tell the Shepherds, *To you is born a Saviour this day, in the City of* David, *Luke* ii. 11. We are the *Heirs of Salvation*; they are but *Ministring Spirits, to further our good*, Hebr. i. 14. The Church is the Spouse; they are but *friends of the Bride, and Bridegroom.* We are the *chief Guests* at this heavenly Banquet; the Angels are but *pocillatores*, as *Luther* speaks, sewers, and servitours at this blessed Feast. That's the second, 'twas his primary Intention.

Thirdly, This destroying of Satan's works, 'tis his effectual, and real intention. Did he purpose it? Then surely he will accomplish it, and effectually perform it. He will make good the end, and purpose of his Incarnation, that shall not be frustrate. His *counsel shall stand, the thoughts of his heart shall be accomplished.* Satan shall fall, his his works shall be destroyed, his captives shall be rescued. *The God of peace shall tread down Satan under our feet.* The Devil, and all his Complices, (however they boast themselves in their success) they undertake a damned Cause, devoted to destruction. See with what assurance God seals up the promise of Christ's Incarnation, and this fruit of it to us: *Esai.* ix. 7. *The Zeal of the* LORD *of Hosts will perform this.*

ON

ON CHRISTMASS-DAY,

The Fourth Sermon.

I. St. JOHN iv. 10.

Herein is Love: not that we loved God; but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the Propitiation for our ſins.

THE Apoſtle Saint *John* had this Prerogative above all the Apoſtles, that he was called, *The Diſciple whom Jeſus loved*; he was the choice Favourite among the Apoſtles, one that enjoyed the greateſt portion of our Saviour's affection: and therefore, having received the greateſt Love, he returns the moſt Love to Chriſt again. His heart was enflamed with the love of Chriſt. He breaths nothing almoſt but Love in this Epiſtle; he ſtirrs up himſelf, and all others, to abound in this moſt Chriſtian grace of Love and Charity.

To enkindle in our hearts this holy affection (knowing, that Love is the greateſt Load-ſtone to draw on Love) he preſſeth upon us that eminent, and tranſcendent Example of God's love to us, and that in the greateſt manifeſtation of it, the ſending his Son into the World, to effect and accompliſh the work of our Redemption.

And that's the purpoſe, and ſcope of the words, which I have read unto you. They contain the high Eſtimate, and Valuation, that St. *John* puts upon the great benefit, which we receive by our Saviour's Incarnation. And the Eſtimate he gives of it, ariſes from two Conſiderations.

Firſt, From the Excellency of the Fountain, and Original, from which it ſprings; that's *The Love of God to us.*

Secondly, From the excellency of the Benefit, which flows from that Fountain; that's *The ſending of Chriſt to accompliſh our Salvation.*

Firſt, The excellency of the Act; that's Love.

Secondly, The excellency of the Effect ariſing from that Love; that's Chriſt's Incarnation, and, by it, the pardon, and propitiation of our ſins.

Firſt, Let us conſider the Fountain, and Original, that's Love: and herein take notice,

Firſt, Of the Inſtance; *Herein is Love:* and then,

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Secondly, Of the amplifying, and illuſtration of it; that's in the words following, *Not that we loved him, but that he loved us*. And what is the ſtrength, and importance of that expreſſion, we ſhall hear hereafter. Come we,

Firſt, To the Inſtance; *Herein is Love*. A Speech it is of great Emphaſis, ſpoken by the Apoſtle with great ſtrength of affection; and it carrieth with it a threefold intimation.

I. It is a ſpecification of that Affection, or rather Attribute, in God, which moſt of all ſhined in this great work of Chriſts Incarnation. There were many other Attributes of God, that concurred in the ſending of his Son to accompliſh our Redemption: as,

1. His Wiſdom, that was eminently ſeen in this great Myſtery. So deep a Myſtery it is, ſuch unſearchable Wiſdom, that it cannot be fathomed, or comprehended by Men, or Angels. St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of this great work of our Redemption, *Epheſ.* i. 8. tells us, that therein *God abounded towards us in all Wiſdom, and Prudence*. It was the choice Maſter-piece of God's Wiſdom, the contriving of this bleſſed work of our Redemption. In it was ſeen πολυποίκιλος σοφία, *the manifold Wiſdom of God*, Epheſ. iii. 10.

2. His Power. In effecting of our Salvation, that Attribute was declared in a wonderfull manner. The Apoſtle calls it, *The exceeding greatneſs of his Power*, Epheſ. i. 19. The Prophet calls it, *The making bare his holy Arm of Salvation*, Eſai. lii. 10. The Creation of the World was the *work of his fingers*, Pſal. viii. 3. but the Redemption of the World was by the ſtretching-forth of his mighty Arm. Hence 'tis, that the Goſpel is called, *the Power of God to Salvation*, Rom. i. 16.

3. His Righteouſneſs. That Attribute was declared in this great work. *David*, foretelling our Saviour's Incarnation, tells us, that then *Righteouſneſs ſhall look down from heaven*, Pſal lxxxv. 11. By *Chriſt's Coming the righteouſneſs of God is declared*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Rom. iii. 25. Take it either way; either for his Holineſs, and Juſtice in hating Iniquity; or for his Faithfulneſs in performing his Promiſe: all his *Promiſes are Yea, and Amen*, ſealed up, and accompliſhed in his ſending of *Chriſt*.

All theſe Attributes ſhined forth in this great work; but above all, his Love to mankinde was moſt gloriouſly ſeen. There, ſaith St. *Paul*, *The Love, and Kindneſs of God our Saviour towards man appeared*, Tit. iii. 4. Thoſe other acts of Wiſdom, and Power, and Righteouſneſs, were all ſubſervient to his great love to us. They were but *actus executivi*, employed to perform that great good, which his Love intended to us. 'Twas his Love, that employed his Wiſdom, his Power, his Righteouſneſs, ſet them on working for our good, and benefit. It was the imperative, and predominant Attribute, that ſet all the reſt on working. Ask, Why his Wiſdom, his Power, his Righteouſneſs did effect ſo great a work for us? here is the reaſon; becauſe *He loved us*. But ask, Why *he loved us?* no reaſon can be given of that, but what *Moſes* gives, *Deut.* vii. 7, 8. *He ſet his love upon us, becauſe he loved us*. That was the ſpring, that ſet all the wheels a going.

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These three, his Wisdom, his Power, his Righteousness, all these are seen in his sending of Christ; but the chiefest above all these is his *love* and *charity* to us.

II. *Herein is Love*; it hath a second Importance, it shews the real proof, and manifestation of his love. It was love testified in the reality of love. It intimates not only an act of love, but an effect of love, a fruit of love. Ἐν τούτῳ, *In this*, that he hath done for us, in this you may see true, real, effectual *love*. It was not a well-wishing *love* only, a kinde affection rising in the heart, and there resting; but a *love*, that breaks forth into action, and evidence, and real performance. 'Twas a *love*, which we *have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled*, as St. *John* describes it. Should we come to that bold Expostulation, which they in *Malachy* make with God, when God protests his *love* to them, they presently say, *Wherein hast thou loved us?* Here is an Answer to that prophane Question, *Wherein hath he loved us? Herein he hath loved us, in that he hath sent his Son to redeem us.* God's *love* to us is not a Benevolence only, but Beneficence also. *Thou art good, and doest good*, saith *David*, Psal. cxix. 68. An operative *love*, a *love* Incarnate. *He hath not left himself, or his Love without witness*, as St. *Paul* speaks, *in that he hath done real good to us*, Acts xiv. 17.

III. *Herein is love*; it hath a third Importance, it carries with it the most clear, and full demonstration of *love* to us. Other fruits of *love* he hath vouchsafed us, and we enjoy them daily; but none so evident, and undeniable proofs of his *love*, as the love of this Day, the sending of his Son to us. Our creation of us, that he first made us; our preservation, that still he maintains us; his patience towards us, that still he forbears us; these are acts of Free Grace, and Favour: but all of them fall short of this, that *he gave his Son for us*; herein is the most signal *love*, in the highest transcendence. For outward blessings, though in their kinde they are beneficial, and tokens of good will; yet, in their intendment, they are not such clear assurances of God's *love* to us. We know not whether God loves us, or hates us, by these outward Events. What saith *Solomon?* Eccles. ix. 1. *No man knows love, or hatred, by all that is before them.* Thou canst not say, God gives me riches, and therefore he loves me; or he sends me poverty, therefore he hates me: these are but weak Conclusions: but this we may undoubtedly conclude, He hath given me his Son, and with him, whatsoever belongs to life, and godliness; and therefore he *loves* me. Saint *John* makes this Conclusion, *He hath loved us*; how doth that appear? *He hath washed us from our sins*, Rev. i. 5. *He hath loved me*, saith St. *Paul*: How proves he that? *He hath given himself for me*, Gal. ii. 20. *Herein God commends his love to us, that Christ died for us*, Rom. v. 8. This makes St. *John* set an *Ecce*, a mark of evidence, and admiration upon this fruit of Love: *Behold, what love the Father hath shewed us, that we should be called the Sons of God!* 1 John iii. 1. That Mercy hath all the dimensions of *love*; herein is

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the heigth, and bredth, and depth of the Love of God; ſuch a Love as is paſt knowledge, exceeding our comprehenſion, *Eph.*iii.18.

We have ſeen the *Inſtance*: Come we,

Secondly, To the *Illuſtration* of the greatneſs, and excellency of this Love; and that is expreſſed in theſe words: *Not that we loved him, but that he loved us.* And we may reſolve this Clauſe into a threefold ſenſe; all which will ſet forth the greatneſs, and excellency of this love of God.

I. We may reſolve theſe words into a preventing ſenſe. We began not with him in this League of Love, but he began with us. That's one Excellency of his love; it was a forward, antecedent, preventing Love.

II. We may reſolve it into a Negative ſenſe. We loved not him, and yet he loved us. That's another excellency of his Love; it was a free, and undeſerved Love, no way due to us.

III. We may reſolve it into a Comparative ſenſe. Had we loved him, or do we love him; yet that's nothing in compariſon of his love to us. *Herein is love, not that we loved him*: no great matter in that; our love to him, 'tis not worth the naming, in reſpect of the great love, which he bare to us: *Herein is love, that he loved us*, and ſo it ſhews the incomparable Excellency of his Love.

So that we have here three Degrees of Excellency in God's Love to us:

1. Is the Priority, and Precedency of his Love.
2. Is the Freeneſs, and Undeſervedneſs of his Love.
3. Is the Invaluable, and incomparable greatneſs of his Love, which he hath ſhewed unto us.

I. His love, it was a Preventing Love. We began not with him, nor made love towards him, but he began with us. And that's a great advantage, and commendation of Love, to have the precedence. The returns of Love are nothing ſo much as the firſt proffers, and beginnings of Love. Our love to God, 'tis but the Eccho of God's love to us. He muſt firſt ſpeak lovingly to us, ere our hearts can Eccho back any love to him; he muſt firſt ſay to us, *Seek thou my face*, before our hearts can ſay, *Thy face* LORD, *will I ſeek*, Pſalm xxvii. 8.

The Scripture inſiſts upon this Excellency of God's Goodneſs, and Love: Pſalm xxi.3. *Thou preventeſt him with the bleſſings of goodneſs.* *David* acknowledges this, *Pſalm* lix. 10. *The God of my Mercy ſhall prevent me.* Preventing Mercy, that's the ſweeteſt Mercy. This our Saviour inculcates to his Diſciples, *You have not choſen me, but I have choſen you*, John xv. 16. *Audi, ingrate; ingrate audi*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine: Non vos elegiſtis me; ſed ego elegi vos.* Unthankfull wretches, liſten to what Chriſt ſaith, you choſe not to love me, but I choſe to love you. And 'tis St. *Paul*'s challenge to all mankinde, *Rom.* xi. 35. *Who hath firſt given unto him?* eſpecially his ſpiritual and redeeming Mercies, they are all Preventing Mercies. His thoughts of Love to us, were his eternal thoughts, and from everlaſting. He loved us, before we

A we loved him; nay, before we could love our ſelves, or had our being; we had a being in his Love, before we had a being in our ſelves. St. *John* gives us a good *Caveat*, that we miſtake not our ſelves in this point; *We love him, becauſe he loved us firſt*, Verſe 19. Our love to him, 'tis at the ſecond hand, and by reflection only: as the Looking-glaſs returns the Schemes of the face, becauſe the face firſt looks upon it.

Theſe Spiritual Mercies are like thoſe merciſull, and miraculous Cures which Chriſt wrought upon the Sabbath-day; he wrought them all unſought to, offered his help unasked; as to the man of *Bethesda*, *Wilt thou be made whole?* So the Woman bowed-down by B *Satan*, *Woman, thou art looſed from thine infirmity*, when ſhe never thought of it: So the man with the withered hand, *Stretch forth thine hand*, and it was cured, when he never expected it: The man born blinde: all theſe were cured in a gracious preventing way. Such was his love in ſending of Chriſt. It was χάριτος, οὐκ ὀφειλῆς, οὐδὲ ἀξίοις, οὐδὲ ἀντιδόσεως, *Chryſoſtom.* We were not, like *Hannah*, weeping, and praying, and begging for a Son; but we may all ſay, as the *Shunamite* ſaid to *Eliſha*, *Did I deſire a Son of my Lord?* Did we ever imagine, or hope for ſuch a fruit of his Love? and then he graciouſly beſtowed it on us.

C That's the firſt Expreſſion of this Clauſe; it was a Preventing Love.

II. Take it in a Negative ſenſe. We loved not him, and yet he loved us, and that adds to the greatneſs of his Love; it was a *free*, *undue*, and *undeſerved Love*. To love them which love us, is no ſuch ſingular thing. Our Saviour counts that but the ordinary courteſie and civility of the World; *Publicans and ſinners will do the ſame*: but herein God commends his Love to us; that, when we were neither *amatores*, nor *amabiles*; neither loving, nor lovely; yet then he ſet his *love* upon us. And ſuch we all were, our Saviour aſſures us of it, D *John* v. 42. *I know you*, ſaith Chriſt, *that you have not the love of God in you.* Not love him; that's not all: *Minùs dictum, plùs intellectum*; we were far from loving him. The Scripture ſets out, how we ſtood affected towards him. We were ſtrangers to him: and ſmall love is to be looked for at the hands of ſtrangers; yea, eſtranged from him; we withdrew our ſelves from him, *Pſal.* lviii. 3. We were ſtrangers from the womb; nay, worſe then ſo, we were provokers of him: *Non invocantibus, ſed provocantibus Deus ſeſe offert*; ſaith *Bernard. God was provoked by us every day*, ſaith *David.* We lived in a ſtate of enmity againſt him; *Rom.* v. multiplying acts of hoſtility; and 'twas the E worſt kinde of hoſtility, it came out of Hatred. St. *Paul* tells us, we were *haters of God*, Rom. i. 30. Far we were from loving him: there was not the leaſt ſpark of love in our hearts towards him; we were void of that *love*, which was more mercenary, and ſelf-ſeeking, which we call *amor concupiſcentiæ*; the loving of him for our own ſakes, that we might enjoy ſome good from him. Such unloving, and unlovely wretches we were, and yet he ſet his *love* upon us.

That's

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That's the ſecond Expreſſion.

III. We may reſolve this ſpeech into a Comparative ſenſe. Had we loved him, or do we love him: yet that's nothing, in compariſon of his Love to us. *Herein is not love, that we loved him:* no great matter in that; it deſerves no *Ecce. Behold! what love?* no ἐν τούτῳ· no note, or mark, to be ſet upon that: no print, or ſtamp of valuation; but, *Herein is love, that he loved us.*

See the great diſproportion 'twixt our *love* to God, and God's *love* to us. Take notice of it in theſe five diſproportions.

1. He is *ſummè amabilis*: in himſelf he is moſt lovely; ſo full of all the attractions, and motives to love, that 'tis no wonder, if we ſhould ſet our love upon him. See how the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, ſurveys all his excellencies, and beauties; and then cries out, *My Beloved is the chiefeſt of ten thouſands, he is moſt ſweet; he is altogether lovely*, Cant. v. Meditate on his goodneſs, his holineſs, his glory; and then tell me, canſt thou place thy Love on any object ſo amiable, as he is? Collect the perfections of all other Creatures, for which we love them; yet they are nothing, in compare, to that infinite beauty, which is in God. When one asked *Ariſtotle*, What *Beauty* was? he anſwered him, That *That was* πρῶτον ἐρώτημα, *A blinde man's Queſtion.* Surely, were the eyes of our Souls open, we ſhould ſee that beauty in God, that would enforce love from us. 'Tis no hard matter to love him, that is ſo lovely. But then, for him to ſet his love upon us, who had nothing amiable, or lovely in us, deformed, polluted, odious; (ſuch we all were) for him to ſet his love upon ſuch, deſerves an *Ecce.* When we were in our blood, in a loathſom condition, (ſo *Ezekiel* deſcribes us) then he ſet his love upon us.

2. Did we love God, it had been no ſuch great matter to be admired; it was our duty to love him. Neceſſity of duty abates of the excellency of any performance. Duty, 'tis a diminution to Deſert. As one ſaith of the love of Parents, and Children; *We do not admire it, where we ſee it: but we crie out of thoſe, and condemn them, in whom it is wanting; becauſe the Law of Nature layes that duty upon them.* Much more may we ſay of our loving of God; ſo many bonds of duty oblige us to it, that 'tis no marvel, if we ſhould perform it: but 'tis a monſtrous wickedneſs to be deſtitute of it. This makes St. *Paul* denounce a dreadfull curſe upon the neglecters of this duty: *If any man love not the* LORD *Jeſus Chriſt, let him be accurſed.* But God's love to us was no way due to us. St. *Paul* calls this Love a *free gift*, Rom. v. 15. *He loved us freely*, Hoſ. xiv. 4. The Creator is no wayes obliged to his Creature.

3. Had we loved God, engaged our hearts to him in this affection: what great matter had it been? We ſhould have gained honour, and dignity by it. For ſuch poor Creatures; yea, for ſuch vile wretches as we were, to enter into a League of love with God, and (as he ſaid of *Abraham*) to be called *The friends of God*, it had been an high advancement, a great priviledge, and prerogative.

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A For men to be joyned in friendſhip with God, *Ariſtotle* counts it an incongruity: 'tis an Axiom with him; *Inter Deum & homines non eſt amicitia:* He thought it too fellow-like, to ſay, God, and we, are in terms of friendſhip; yet, this honour we gain by loving of him. *I call you my friends*, ſaith Chriſt, *John* xv. 15. What ſaith St. *John? We have fellowſhip with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 John i. 3. But then, on God's part, it had been a great condeſcenſion, to accept of our love, and to beſtow his love upon us. Superiours ſtand not upon terms of love with their Inferiours: but expect aw, and reverence and fear, and obedience. *Oderint, dum metuant.* 'Tis a great ſtooping, and
B condeſcenſion, for God to own our love, and to admit of it.

4. Had we loved him, yet, what great matter would that have been? Our love to him would have been beneficial to our ſelves, not to him. Our love to him adds nothing to his perfection, all the fruit of it accrues to our ſelves. *Non, ex te, ille major; ſed tu, ſine illo, minor.* Without our loving of him, we had been the looſers: by loving him, we only are the gainers. As St. *Auguſtine*, ſpeaking of thoſe words in St. *Luke*, of *being rich towards God*, *Eſtote divites Deo*, ſaith he: *Non eum facturi divitem, ſed de illo futuri divites.* Our love
C doth not enrich him, but our ſelves. Indeed, when the Scripture exhorts us to love God, 'tis as much as if it ſhould ſay, *Love your ſelves, love your own ſouls.* St. *Auguſtine* asks the Queſtion, Why in the Scripture we are commanded to love God, and our Neighbour; but we finde no Commandement to love our ſelves? and he gives this Anſwer to the Queſtion: That, *In the command of loving God is neceſſarily implyed a command of loving our ſelves: Fingi non poteſt major dilectio ſui, quàm dilectio Dei: He loves himſelf truly, that loves God cordially.* How can we better love our ſelves, then by loving him, that is the beatifical good, and can make us bleſſed; the knowing, and loving of whom, is eternal life?

D 5. Had we loved him, it had been no ſuch great matter: nothing in compare of his Love to us. The mediocrity, and low degree of our love, at the beſt, makes it no way to be named with the Love of God. Our love, compared with his, 'tis as a drop to the Ocean; as a poor ſpark to the whole Element of fire; as an atom, or ſmall duſt, to the whole Globe of the Earth. Thoſe everlaſting flames of love, the holy Angels, their love is but chill, and cold, in reſpect of God's love to us.

St. *Paul* ſets it forth in words of vehemency; *God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us*, Epheſ. ii. 4. *God ſo loved the World: ſo*, 'tis not a *ſic ſicut*; but a *ſic ut*: not a comparing
E it with any other love, 'tis beyond all compariſon. Indeed, to make us underſtand it, he uſes the ſimilitude of the greateſt love amongſt men: as the love of a Friend to his Friend; or the love of Parents to their Children; or the love of an Husband to his Wife: but yet all fall ſhort. Whereas he may ſay of our love to him, as he ſpeaks of the People of *Iſrael*, Ezek. xvi. 30. *How weak is thine heart, ſaith the* LORD *God*, How cold is thy love to me?

We

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We have done with the firſt Particular of the Text, the excellency of the Fountain, and Original, from whence the great mercy of this Day did ſpring; that's *The love of God.*

Come we now to the

Second, That's the Excellency of the benefit, which flows from the Fountain: that's the ſending of Chriſt to accompliſh our Salvation.

And here are three great, and gracious fruits of *love.*

Firſt, *Quòd miſit,* That he would ſend to us.

Secondly, *Quòd filium,* That he ſent his Son to us.

Thirdly, *Quòd propitiationem,* That he ſent him to this end, and purpoſe, to propitiate our ſins for us.

Firſt, *Quod miſit,* That he would ſend to us.

I. This act of ſending to us, argues much love. It had been much for him to admit of our ſending, and addreſſes to him. Conſider upon what terms we ſtood with God, and we will confeſs it.

1. The Inferiour ſhould ſend, and ſeek to the Superiour: Reaſon would have it ſo.

2. The Party offending, to the Party offended; good reaſon, he ſhould ſeek, and ſue, that hath done the offence.

3. The weaker ſhould ſend to the ſtronger. He, that hath but a thouſand, ſhould ſend to him, that comes againſt him with two thouſand, our Saviour tells us; that's both reaſon, and wiſdom too. The ſervants of *Benhadad* thought it became them to ſeek, and ſupplicate to the King of *Iſrael,* that had got the better of them.

4. They, that need Reconciliation, ſhould ſeek to him that needs it not. As the men of *Tyre* and *Sydon* ſued to *Herod* for reconciliation, *becauſe their Countrey was maintain'd by the King's Countrey,* Acts xii. 20. they could not live without him. Leagues, and Covenants of peace, and love, they are grounded upon mutual neceſſitude: when Parties are mutually uſefull to each others, that draws on to terms of amity and reconciliation. But God had no need of our love. He promiſes this, when he made his League, and Covenant with *Abraham*; he tells him then, *I am God All-ſufficient.* He ſtands in no need of our love or amity; Yet he condeſcends from all theſe advantages, and graciouſly vouchſafes to ſend to us. 'Tis a Speech beyond all admiration, 2 Cor. v. 20. *We are Ambaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you.*

That's the firſt; *Miſit, non Admiſit tantúm.*

II. *Miſit, non permiſit tantúm.* God ſent him to us wittingly, and willingly. Our Saviour came not of himſelf only, but the Father ſent him. Chriſt did not work our Salvation, as *Jonathan* got the Victory over the *Philiſtines,* of himſelf, without Commiſſion, and Privity from his Father. No, St. *Paul* tells us, *He gave himſelf for us, according to the will of God the Father,* Gal. i. 11. It was a full Miſſion and Commiſſion; He ſent him: Yea, more then ſo, He ſent him, and Authorized him: *Him hath God the Father ſealed,* John vi. 27. laid his Command upon him to effect this Work. *This Commandment,* ſaith Chriſt,

A Chriſt, *have I received of my Father*, John x. 18. God ſpeaks to Chriſt, as *Jacob* to *Joſeph*, *Come, I will ſend thee to thy Brethren — Go, I pray thee; ſee how it fares with thy Brethren*, Gen. xxxvii. 13.

III. He ſent him:

1. *Non ut nuncium, ſed ut donum:* Not as a Meſſenger only, but as a Gift alſo; that's the beſt kinde of ſending. He ſo ſent him, as that he gave him to us. *Iſaiah* expreſſes it in terms of Giving: *To us a Son is given: Dedit*, nay, more than ſo, *tradidit*, he delivered him over to us, and for our behoof. Thus our Saviour expreſſes himſelf to the Woman of *Samaria*, John iv. 10. *If thou kneweſt the Gift of* B *God, and who it is that ſpeaks unto thee.* That Gift of God, that ſingular choice gift, ſuch is Chriſt become to us.

2. *Ut donum, non ut promiſſum donum, ſed ut præſtitum*: He was a *gift*, not only promiſed, but actually beſtowed, and exhibited to us. We enjoy him, whom the *Prophets* promiſed, the *Patriarchs* expected. We may ſay what *Philip* ſaid to *Nathaneel*, John i. 45. *We have found him, of whom* Moſes *in the Law, and the Prophets did write.* Let us make *Nathaneel*'s acknowledgment; *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of* Iſrael.

That's the firſt Conſideration, in that God ſent to us. But then,

C *Secondly*, Here is an higher expreſſion of his Love, in that he ſent his Son to us. And here take notice,

I. Of the *Dignity* of the Perſon: and then,

II. Of the *Dignation*, or ſending him to us.

I. Take notice of the *Dignity* of him that was ſent. He was his Son, both when he ſent him, and before he ſent him. Which I note againſt that wicked Opinion of that Heretick *Socinus*, that denies Chriſt to be the Son of God from Eternity, or that he was the Son of God, when he came into the world; but, I wot not what kinde of Creature all his life-time, and at laſt was made the Son of God, after D his Death, and Reſurrection. Beſides all other evidences to the contrary, even this form of ſpeech ſhews the madneſs of this blaſphemy. We ſend not that, which ſhall hereafter be, but that, which is already before we ſend it. That's the Dignity of his Perſon. Saint *Paul* tells us, He was *in the form of God, before he took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made Man for us*, Phil. ii. 6, 7.

II. See the *Dignation*. For ſo great a God to ſend any, though never ſo mean, to ſuch Wretches as we were, had been a dignation, and favour, more than we could expect, more than we can deſerve at his hands; but to ſend his Son, his only Son, his beloved Son, his Son in E whom his *ſoul delighted*, to ſend him to us, is a teſtimony of Love beyond all comprehenſion. To ſend his *ſervants* to us, as he did to the *Jews*, was a Mercy which he often charged upon them; *I ſent my ſervants the Prophets, riſing early, and ſending them.* The Apoſtle ſhews us our happineſs above that of the *Jews* in this particular: *Heb.* i. 1. *God at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake, in times paſt, unto the Fathers by the Prophets; but hath, in theſe laſt days, ſpoken unto us by his Son,*

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parted with him, to beſtow him upon us. Saint *Paul* expreſſes that with an Emphaſis, *He ſpared not his only Son, but gave him for us all.* How hardly did *Jacob* part with his *Benjamin*, though to ranſom his Brother, and to provide for his Family? God ſpared not his only Son, but beſtowed him upon us. Now we know, that thou haſt loved us, in that thou haſt not with-held thine *onely Son* from us. A

But then,

Thirdly, The next thing conſiderable is the purpoſe, and end of ſending him, that is, *To be the propitiation for our ſins.*

I. It was for ſins. And that will ſatisfie that nice, and fond Queſtion of the School-men, "Whether mankinde did merit *Chriſt*'s "*Incarnation*, or any circumſtances of it? And ſome of them ſpare not to affirm it, that *Abraham*, and other Holy men, and eſpecially the Virgin *Mary*, did merit, that Chriſt ſhould come, and be *Incarnate* of them. No, Saint *Auguſtine* ſaith truly, *Chriſtum de cœlo in terram non merita noſtra bona, ſed peccata duxerunt.* We all did need it, but none did deſerve it. He came to pardon our ſins, not to reward our merits. We might rather cry out with *Peter*, *Lord, depart from us, for we are ſinfull men*: than ſay, *Lord, come, and viſit us; for we deſerve it at thy hands.* B

So then, 'twas for the ſake of Sinners, that he ſent him; and that's a great manifeſtation of Love. C

1. It had been much, if *pro juſtis*, for juſt and good men, and for their benefit; Saint *Paul* tells us, 'tis a Mercy, not to be matched among men. *Scarcely for a righteous man one would die: but God commended his love towards us, in that, while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us*, Rom. v. 7. That God ſhould ſhew ſuch love to ſinners; ſo holy a God, to whom ſin is ſo odious; that he ſhould ſhew mercy, and love; infinite holineſs, and yet infinite love towards ſuch, in whom there was infinite ſin.

2. It was for Sinners, there is yet more in that; all ſins are againſt him directly. To mediate for thoſe, that have offended another, is a kindneſs, and office of love, that may be found amongſt men: but God is the Perſon wronged, our ſins are all againſt him; his Law was broken, his Will diſobeyed, his Name diſhonoured: *Againſt thee, thee onely have I ſinned*; yet ſee his love, he ſends to propitiate, and expiate our ſins againſt himſelf. D

3. 'Twas for Sinners. And in what Condition, think ye, were they? let Saint *Paul* tell us:

1. We were *ſinners* of *no ſtrength*.

2. He tells us, we were *Concluſi*, *ſhut up*, and impriſoned. *When we were without ſtrength, Chriſt died for us*, Rom. v. 8. When we had no ſtrength, either to help our ſelves, or annoy him. To ſend to Rebels in Arms, and to offer them Pardon, hath been found amongſt men: but for Rebels ſubdued, and under the power of their Sovereign; Nay, *concluſi*, ſhut up, (ſo Saint *Paul* terms us) we lay all at his Mercy, and then he ſends unto us his Propitiation. E

You

A You know what *Saul* ſaid, when *David* had him in his power in the Cave, and might have diſpatched him: *If a man finde his enemy, will he let him go well away?* 1 Sam. xxiv. 19. I, but God had us at this advantage, all diſarmed, and impriſoned, and he ſends us not a Meſſage of Death; but of Peace and Pardon.

That's the firſt, it was for Sinners.

II. It was for the *Propitiating of our ſins.* That was the great work, for which he came; as *Eſai* ſpeaks, *Chap.* xxvii. 9. *This is all the fruit, to take away ſin.* That was his errand, on which he came; this he publiſhed, and made known to the World. 'Twas the end of B all his Miracles, to ſeal up this Truth to us. As he told them, when he cured the Palſey-man; *Whether is it eaſier to ſay, Thy ſins are forgiven thee: or to ſay, Take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know, the Son of Man hath power to forgive ſins.* 'Twas as eaſie for him to ſay the one, as the other; but it was more ſuitable to his Office, more behooffull for us, to make this Truth known to us, that he came to pardon and forgive ſins.

And this is called here, *A propitiating of our ſins.* It concerns us to underſtand it. And, that we may do ſo, let us take notice of three things.

C 1. What's the *nature* of this propitiating?

2. What's the *means* of it?

3. What's the *matter?*

1. What is the Nature of it? To propitiate is to appeaſe God's wrath, and diſpleaſure, juſtly taken againſt us, and to reduce us into grace, and favour again. It may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, that he ſhould love us, and yet be angry with us. Where ſo much love is, as we have heard, what needs propitiating, and pacifying, and reconciliation? Yes, he loved us, that he might love us, (as before ye heard in the Original) he loved us, becauſe he loved us; ſo here in D the effect, he loved us, that he might love us. *Ut pulchram faceret, fœdam amavit*; he loved us in our deformity, that he might put upon us a ſpiritual beauty. *Diſplicentes amati ſumus, ut eſſet in nobis, unde placeremus.* He loved us, when we diſpleaſed him: that he might work in us that which pleaſeth him. As it was love in God to *Job*'s three friends, even when his wrath was kindled againſt them: that he calls for a Sacrifice of them, that might appeaſe him, *Job* xlii. 8. His love of Benevolence wrought in him this deſire of Complacency; his love firſt pitied us: that ſo he might make us ſuch, as he might delight in us. *In his love, and in his pity, he redeemed us,* Eſai. lxiii. 9. That's E the *nature* of this propitiating love, and mercy to us.

2. What is the Means? That is implyed in this act of Propitiation; and that's a further degree of love. He did it by the means of making a full ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God for us. That's properly to propitiate; not, as *Socinus* wickedly affirms, to mediate only, and entreat for pardon. No; Chriſt tendred a full Compenſation to God, for all our ſins, and ſo appeaſed him. Still we ſee the Scripture calls

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for a Ranſom, a Price, a Recompenſe, *Exod.* xxx. there God exacts a Ranſom for our ſouls. So *Job* xxxiii. 24. *Elihu* ſhews how we are ſaved: God ſaith, *Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a Ranſom.* Chriſt is not only an Interceſſour, but a Propitiatour, and Redeemer; and he hath done away our ſins, not by a free diſpenſation, but by a full, and juſt compenſation. But then,

3. What's the Matter of our Propitiation? the Price of our Ranſom? That's the higheſt improvement of Love. That's expreſſed in the Text, He is our Propitiation: Not only our Propitiator, but our Propitiation. 'Tis a great deal more to be our Propitiation, than to be our Propitiator. As St. *Bernard* on thoſe words of *David*, *Thou art my hope*, ſaith, *Amplius quid, & ſublimius ſonat.* 'Tis more to ſay, *Thou art my hope*; then to ſay, *I hope for ſomething from thee.* He hoped not only in him, but for him. *Nihil, Domine, præter teipſum.* So, 'tis much more, that Chriſt is our Propitiation, than our Propitiator. He is not only our Saviour, but he is become our Salvation: as *David* ſpeaks. He is not only our Redeemer, but our Ranſom. *He gave himſelf a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. *He layed down his life for us. He made his ſoul an offering for ſin*, Eſai. liii. 10. *Him God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation by his Blood*, Rom. iii. 25. I, 'tis the *Blood that makes the Atonement for our ſouls*, Levit. xvii. 11. *He was the Lamb, that takes away the ſins of the World.* He was not only the Prieſt, but the Sacrifice alſo. He not only acted for us, but ſuffered for us. *He loved us, and gave himſelf for us*, Gal. ii. 20. *He redeems us from the curſe, being made a curſe for us*, Gal. iii. 13. What *Paul* ſaith of his love to the *Corinths*, may, in a far higher degree, be ſpoken by Chriſt; *I will gladly ſpend, and be ſpent for you.* He ſpent his pains: yea, he ſpent his blood for us. He was the Propitiator: yea, more than ſo, the *Price*, and *Propitiation for our ſins.*

To cloſe up all: We have ſeen this great *love* of God to us; what effect ſhould this *love* of God work in us? Sure, it ought to produce a three-fold effect.

First, *Admiration.*
Secondly, *Retribution.* And then,
Thirdly, *Imitation.*

First, It ſhould teach us to faſten our *Admiration* on this great love of God, to work our ſelves to an holy wonderment, that God ſhould beſtow ſuch love upon us. Adore this great goodneſs of God, in ſending his Son to us. The Angels of Heaven, they wonder at this Love, and adore him for it, though he came not for their ſakes, but for ours only. God calls upon the Angels for this adoration; when *he brings in the Firſt-begotten into the World, he ſaith, Let all the Angels of God worſhip him*, Heb. i. 9. How ſhould our hearts be raiſed up into an holy rapture of admiration, that God ſhould ſo love us? It ſhould make us cry out with the Pſalmiſt, *LORD, what is man, that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thy love upon him? or the Son of man, that thou ſhouldeſt thus regard him?* And again, *Oh! how great is thy goodneſs,*

A *goodneſs, which thou haſt layed up, and prepared for us?* We may invert the ſpeech of the *Jews* to our Saviour: *How is it, that thou, being a Man, makeſt thy ſelf God?* John x. 33. Let us ſay with wonder, and admiration, at this our Saviour's condeſcenſion; *How is it, that thou, being God, wilt vouchſafe to make thy ſelf Man?* When Chriſt ſhed tears for *Lazarus*, the People ſaid preſently, *Behold, how he loved him!* Chriſt hath not ſhed tears only for us (the tears of his Infancy, and Nativity) but he hath ſhed his blood for us. Oh! let our ſouls ſay, *Behold, how he hath loved us!*

That's the firſt effect, an holy Admiration.

B Secondly, This great love of God to us calls for another effect; that's an holy *Retribution* of love to him again. He hath prevented us with Love; let us make the returns of love to him again. *Si pigri eramus ad amandum, non ſimus pigri ad redamandum*; ſaith *Bernard*. He began with us in love, let us ſtudy to anſwer his love again. *To whom much is forgiven*, ſaith Chriſt, *he will love much*. Retribution will caſt about, and be conſultive how to teſtifie our love again. Say with *David*, *Quid retribuam? What ſhall I render unto the* LORD, *for all his benefits beſtowed upon me?* Pſal. cxvi. 12. Say to thy ſoul, as *Eliſha* ſpeaks in another caſe: *He hath done all this for me, what ſhall I do* C *for him again?* Provoke thy ſelf, enflame thine heart with the Love of him, who hath ſo loved thee. Say, and ſay it affectionately, what *David* ſaith to him, *Pſal.* xviii. 1. *I will love thee,* O LORD, *my ſtrength, and my Redeemer*.

Thirdly, This love of God requires in us an holy *Imitation*. *Walk in love*, ſaith St. *Paul, as Chriſt loved us*, Epheſ. v. 2. Make him the pattern of our Imitation. *We ought to walk*, ſaith St. *John*, (i. 2. 6.) *even as he hath walked*. How is that? ſaith St. *Auguſtine*: Not, as he walked upon the Sea; but as he walked in love, and charity, and doing of good; to imitate his love to us, in loving our Brethren. D *Non permittor tantummodo imitari, ſed jubeor imitari*: Auguſt. If God ſo loved us, we ought to *love one another*. 'Tis the uſe St. *John* makes of the Doctrine of my Text, in the next *Verſe* following. The Inference, one would think, would be more proper, and kindly; *If God ſo loved us, we ought to love him*. But God ſets over our love, due to him, in the effects of it, to our Brethren. He eſteems it, as done to himſelf, what is done to them. Indeed, the honour of our Love, that referrs to him: but the fruits, and comforts of our Love, they muſt be exhibited to his Servants, and Children. The honour of our Love, that's to be referred to God: that's the *fat of the Sa-* E *crifice*, which muſt be burnt upon the Altar, and offered up to God; but the helpfulneſs of our Love, that's the *fleſh of the Sacrifice*, that muſt be communicated to our Brethren. As the Servants of the King of *Ammon* ſaid to their King, when *David* ſent to him, to ſhew kindneſs to him, 2 *Sam.* x. 3. *Thinkeſt thou, that* David *doth honour thy Father, that he hath ſent Comforters unto thee?* So 'tis with us: Let thy love be comfortable to thy Brethren, and it ſhall be

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be honourable unto God thy Father. He takes it as done to himself. O! how happy will it be, for to hear that ſpeech of Chriſt ſpoken unto thee; *In that you have done it to my Brethren, you have done it unto me.*

In particular, imitate this love of God, in all the Prints and Characters of Love expreſſed in my Text.

I. The Reality of thy Love, Ἐν τούτῳ. Shew thy love by the fruits of Love, as St. *John* ſpeaks. *Let us not love in word, or in tongue, but in deed, and in truth,* 1 John iii. 18. Not like the Love Saint *James* ſpeaks of, well-wiſhing only; *Be warm, and be cloathed:* good words, but no true teſtimonies of love; good wiſhes, but not a morſel of Bread to feed them, not a rag to cloath them. What ſaith St. *John? We ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren: But, if we ſee our brother hath need, and ſhut up our bowels of compaſſion againſt him, how dwells the love of God in us?* 1 John iii. 16.

II. We muſt imitate this love of God in the Preventions of love, in *ſhewing of love, going one before another.* To begin with our brethren in love, not to ſtay till they begin with us. The firſt invitations of love, the firſt reconciliations of love, they are the choiceſt teſtimonies of our love. We look, that *Jacob* ſhould ſend us a Preſent to purchaſe Peace; he muſt bow down ſeven times before us, ere we will embrace him.

III. We muſt imitate this love of God in the Condeſcenſions of his love, to our Inferiours (ſuch were we, when God loved us) to our Enemies, thoſe that ſtand in need of our love, not we of theirs; ſuch was the love of God to us, ſuch ſhould be our love to others.

IV. We muſt imitate this love of God, in that great and main Effect of his love to our ſouls, in freeing them from ſin. Herein was his love ſeen; he came to propitiate our ſins. We cannot attain to that work for expiation of our brethrens ſins; but yet preventions of ſin, or reclaiming from ſin, exhorting, perſwading, praying for them, to keep them from ſin, 'tis a great fruit of love. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, but thou ſhalt in any wiſe reprove him, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* Levit. xix. 17.

Love to the Soul of thy Brother, 'tis the beſt love; and to keep him from ſin, or to free him of ſin, 'tis the beſt love to his Soul. What ſaith our Saviour? *If thy brother offend, tell him of it; and, if he repent, thou haſt gained thy brother.* This is *Utilis amicitia*, the gainfulleſt love, to ſave him from ſin. 'Tis Saint *James* his concluſion of his Epiſtle, and it ſhall be mine; *Brethren, if any of you do erre from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the Sinner from the errour of his way, ſhall ſave a ſoul from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins.*

ON

ON CHRISTMASS-DAY,

The Fifth Sermon.

MATTH. iii. 7, 8, 9.

7. *But, when he ſaw many of the* Phariſees, *and* Sadducees *come to his Baptiſm, he ſaid unto them, O generation of Vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*

8. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*

9. *And think not to ſay within your ſelves, We have* Abraham *to our Father: For I ſay unto you, that God is able of theſe ſtones to raiſe up children unto* Abraham.

AS this Sacred Anniverſary of our Saviours Nativity, ſo likewiſe this Chapter repreſents unto us *Diluculum Evangelii*, the firſt dawning and Day-break of the Goſpel. Before the Sun of Righteouſneſs himſelf ariſes, here is a Day-ſtar appears in the Firmament of the Church, that tells us, *The Night is paſt, the Day is at hand; that it is time to lay aſide the deeds of darkneſs, and to ſet our ſelves to the works of light.* And this Day-ſtar is *John the Baptiſt*. In himſelf a great preſident, and pattern of Mortification; and, by his Miniſtery, a Preacher of Repentance. And the light of that Doctrine, 'tis like the light of the Day-ſtar, fore-running, and uſhering in the Sun of Righteouſneſs. Repentance, 'tis the Harbinger of the Goſpel; it fits, and prepares men for the receiving of Chriſt.

And, though the preaching of this Duty may ſeem to refer more to the Faſt, then to the other Solemnity (Faſting-days being the Feſtivals of Repentance) yet theſe ſowre Herbs of Penitential ſorrow will quicken our appetite, to feed more ſavourly on this Lamb of God. However a Sermon of Repentance cannot be improper for the Day; it

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it being the main End, and Errand, for which Christ came into the world. *He came to call sinners to repentance.* And it was his first Theme he treated upon. *Mat.* iv. 17. *Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent.* Both this Coming, and this Preaching of Repentance hath the like success. Satan startles at both. When he was born, *Herod* was troubled at it. It was *Magnus ille Herodes*, saith *Theodoret*; *The Devil was that great* Herod, *that was perplexed at it.* And he can as little endure this Doctrin of Repentance. *Chrysostom* saith, *The* Devil *never hears a Sermon preached of Repentance; but he trembles at it.*

Besides, in these days of danger, and bloody dissentions, 'twill be useful to joyn the Commemoration of our Saviour's Nativity with the penitent Deprecations of our present miseries. *Ecce! Virgo concipiet,* was the blessed sign, and token of deliverance God gave to his People from their cruel enemies.

The *Macedonians*, being invaded by the *Illyrian* Armies, *Regem infantem, in cunis productum, ante aciem collocabant.* They brought their new-born King in his Cradle, and placed him in the Head of their Armies. That proved auspicious, and they vanquished their Enemies. Let us now present this Holy Babe Jesus to our Angry God, whose Judgments are now up in Arms against us: And, I trust, he will suffer himself to be overcome by us. Let us place our new born Saviour 'twixt us, and our enemies. *In hoc vincemus. By the Mysterie of his Incarnation, and Holy Nativity*, let us pray for deliverance.

And withal, St. *Cyprian*'s saying will here hold good too, *Qui semel pro nobis, semper in nobis*; He, that was this day born for us, must be again conceived, and born in us. And the pangs of Repentance, they are *nixus parturientis*, the Throws of this holy Birth. When we have felt the sorrows, the Birth of the man-childe will bring us Joy. And that will be the sweetest joy: Not only *Gaudium post dolorem*, Joy after sorrow; *sed gaudium ex dolore*, Joy arising out of sorrow which is the truest joy.

To work this blessed work, was the drift of *John Baptist*'s preaching. And this Doctrine of his was entertained by many, with great readiness, and alacrity. The People, from all Parts, resorted unto him; and God gave great testimony to the Word of his Grace, by the conversion of many.

Amongst others, here offer themselves unexpected Auditours, and Disciples, whom *John* little looked for. Men, that had disdained to be put to School by any. The great Rabbies of the Time; the Pharisees, and Sadducees; these repair to St. *John*, and their coming is for a good, and ghostly purpose, of pure zeal *to be Baptized of him.*

And then the Words, that I have read unto you, report the welcome, that St. *John* gives to these great Masters of *Israel*, that will do him the favour to turn Disciples to him.

And the entertainment is far otherwise, then they expected.

First, He begins with a sharp reprehension, *O generation of Vipers! who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come?*

Secondly,

A Secondly, He proceeds to a ſerious, and neceſſary Injunction; *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.*

Thirdly, He enforces that with a ſeaſonable Caveat, and Prevention; *And think not to ſay within your ſelves, We have* Abraham *to our Father: for I ſay unto you, that God is able of theſe ſtones, to raiſe up children unto* Abraham.

Firſt, For the Reprehenſion; 'tis ſharp, and hath a double edg.

I. Here is a quick, and a cutting Compellation; *O generation of Vipers!*

II. Here is a ſharp, and ſevere expoſtulation; *Who hath warned*
B *you to flee from the wrath to come?*

We will paſs by the Compellation, though good Uſe may be made of it. *Ex Vipera Theriacam*; *Vipers* ſaith *Pliny, may be dreſſed into a ſovereign Medicine.*

We will begin with the Expoſtulation; *Who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come?* and of it we will take a double view.

Firſt, With reference to theſe Phariſees, and Sadduces; as it carries with it an edg, and acrimony of reproof to them.

Secondly, Then abſolutely in it ſelf; and ſo we will conſider the ſeveral Truths contained in it.

C *Firſt*, Look upon it, as it reſpects, and reproves theſe Phariſees, and Sadduces, and then the Emphaſis, and Force of it will admit theſe five Apprehenſions.

I. 'Tis *Vox admirantis*; 'tis a Speech of wonderment, and admiration. 'Tis ſtrange to ſee theſe men repair to *John Baptiſt*, to ſeek to him for help, and direction. Theſe two, amongſt others, were two famous Sects among the *Jews*. That degenerating Church, at this Time, ſwarmed with ſuch Sectaries. As ſuch kind of Creatures breed of putrefaction. The Churches corruption, 'tis their generation.

1. The Sadduces; they were flat Atheiſts: what makes them
D thus forward? They, that believed neither Heaven, nor Hell, held all Religion a meer Policy, to keep people in awe: Who hath perſwaded them, that *there is wrath to come?* and warned them to avoid it?

2. The Phariſees; they were highly conceited of their own Sanctity, accounted themſelves out of the reach of any reproof; exact men, beyond all exception. If God had any Saints upon Earth, they were the men. Heaven was their due, they had abundantly deſerved it. 'Tis ſtrange they ſhould pretend need of St. *John*'s Baptiſm. Who hath made them fear the danger of Hell, and adviſed them to
E eſcape it?

3. Take them both together. So they were notorious Diſſemblers; ſetled upon the Lees, and Dregs of Hypocriſie; remorſleſs Hypocrites, void of all conſcience: 'tis a wonder to ſee them make towards Religion, to look after Salvation.

Obſerve it, of all ſorts of Sinners, theſe three,

1. The profane Atheiſt, that counts all Religion a meer Mockery.

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2. The proud *Phariſee*, that boaſts of his Sanctity.

3. The pretending, falſe-hearted Hypocrite. They are the moſt hopeleſs ſinners; the ſaving of ſuch is moſt unlikely, and improbable. He, that means to go to Heaven, muſt

1. Believe, that there is ſuch a State.

2. Confeſs, and acknowledg he ſtands in need of it.

3. Seriouſly ſet himſelf to the attaining of it. Now,

1. The *Sadducee*, and thoſe of his Tribe, they fail in the firſt. Heaven, and Hell are both μυθολογίαι, Fables to them, mere Dreams, and Fictions.

2. The *Phariſee*, and ſuch holy ones, as he, they fail in the ſecond. They are already poſſeſs'd of Heaven; no need of Converſion to entitle them to it. And then,

3. The *Hypocrite*, he fails in the third. If, beſides ſome demure, out-ſide performances, you hold Heaven at an high price, 'tis no bargain for him; he will never deal for it. Publicans, and Harlots, and the worſt of ſinners, get the ſtart of him, and go to Heaven before him, *Matth.* xxi. 31. That's the firſt Apprehenſion, 'tis *Vox Admirantis.*

II. *Who hath forewarned you?* 'Tis *Vox Repellentis*; a Speech of repulſe, and rejection. As if he ſhould ſay, "I am not ſent to ſuch "as you are, hardned, hypocritical, malicious Sinners: the glad tidings "of the Goſpel belong not unto you; Hell, and *the Wrath to come*, "is your deſerved portion, not that this was a peremptory rejection, utterly excluding them from hope of Heaven; it did not betoken an impoſſibility; but ſets forth the great difficulty of their finding Mercy.

The Grace of the Goſpel, 'tis not alike open to all. Some ſort of Sinners may be ſooner admitted; others muſt be ſtaved off, and the hardneſs of Salvation muſt be preſt upon them. Thus St. *Peter* affrights profane men; *If the righteous be ſcarcely ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly, and ſinners appear?* He ſhuts heaven-gates againſt them.

This muſt be the Wiſdom of our diſpenſation, not to aſſure Pardon hand over head, to admit all comers upon equal Terms. *On ſome have compaſſion*, ſaith Saint *Jude*; *others ſave with fear.* Seeſt thou a poor, contrite, broken hearted Sinner coming towards Chriſt? O run, and meet him, ſet open heaven to him, remove all impediments, aſſure him of Pardon. But to obdurate Sinners deny admiſſion, clog the gaining of heaven with difficulties, repel, and reject them. Thus the Prophet *Jeremy* anſwered the Hypocritical, rebellious *Jews*, that came to conſult with him, *Whither they ſhould go?* Chap. xv. 2. *Whither ſhall ye go? ſuch as are for death, to death; and ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword; and ſuch as are for famine, to famine; and ſuch as are for captivity, to captivity.* Thus Chriſt flaſhes Hell-fire into the faces of the *Phariſees*, makes it almoſt impoſſible for ſuch to be ſaved, *Matth.* xxiii. 33. *Ye Serpents, ye generation of Vipers, how can ye eſcape the damnation of Hell?* Of ſome Sinners Chriſt ſaith, *How hardly ſhall ſuch*

A *ſuch enter into the Kingdom of heaven?* Mat xix. 24. 'Tis not an eaſie thing for any man for to be ſaved. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate.* 'Tis a narrow paſſage at the beſt; but to ſome 'tis as narrow as a Needle's eye. *Eaſier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, then for ſuch to enter into the Kingdom of heaven.* Such repulſes, and difficulties are uſeful: It will ſhame them, it will affright them, it will arouze them, make them look about them, if they mean to be ſaved.

III. *Who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come?* 'Tis *Vox Irridentis.* There is an holy Sarcaſm in the Speech. "What? "you ſeek to me to eſcape damnation! You have ways of your own, B "that will ſerve well enough. They were the great Maſters in *Iſrael*, exact in all Rites, and Cuſtoms; not a ſin, but they knew a ſalve for it: This Treſpaſs will be purged by ſuch a Ceremony; they had Expiations for all ſorts of Tranſgeſſions. *Phariſees*, had they been at Market, and there cheated, and cozened, 'twas but calling for water, and waſhing their hands, and they were cleanſed preſently. What ſaith Saint *John?* Do ye now ſee the vanity of your perfunctory Devotions? Theſe Rabbies, they were utterly to ſeek how to reconcile themſelves to God, to get peace into their conſciences, and eſcape damnation.

C *Nicodemus*, he was a Maſter in *Iſrael*; not a Rite in *Moſes* Law, but he could tell the uſe of it. But, when Chriſt tells him of Regeneration, he knows not what it means; *How can a man be born again?* Cunning, expert men in Rites, and Sacrifices; but extreme Ignorant of ſpiritual Duties. Queſtion with a *Phariſee*, and he will tell you how many Words, and Letters there are in the Bible; as many Precepts, as there be Days in the year, or Bones in a man's body: but queſtion him in point of Conſcience, and ye poſe him preſently. Thus, this new *Elias* imitates the old: in an holy deriſion he ſent *Ahab*, and his Prophets to *Baal*; *Call upon him, ſee whether* Baal *can ſend you you fire* or D *water* from heaven, or give relief to you.

IV. *Who hath forewarned you?* 'Tis *Vox Exprobrantis.* 'Tis an Upbraiding Speech, caſting in their teeth their former impenitency. You, that have long deſpiſed the Grace of God, ſlighted, and ſet at naught ſo many warnings, mocked Gods Miniſters, and Meſſengers, What are you now adviſed after ſuch long obſtinacy?

Obſerve it; *Such, as have been deſpiſers of the Grace of God, lived in a conſtant contempt of the means of ſalvation, God will reckon with ſuch for all their contempts, upbraid, and lay to their charge their former obſtinacy.* Their ſlighting of *John*, they ſhall be ſure to hear of it, E *Mat.* xxi. 32. John *came to you in the way of righteouſneſs, and ye believed him not.*

Here is the advantage of timely Converſion, to anſwer God's firſt call, to meet him at his early riſings, and ſendings; God mingles no reproaches, or exprobation. There hath been no means of Grace ſpilt, or loſt upon them. The Father ſaith, *Go into my Vineyard*; and they go preſently.

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St. *Paul* took comfort in the ſeaſon of his Converſion, that it was not dilatory. *I was not diſobedient to the heavenly Viſion*, Act. xxvi. 19. Thoſe that went early, at the firſt hour, into the vineyard, had no checks given them; but they that ſtood out till the eleventh hour, (like thoſe Winds in *Seneca*, that never riſe till towards the evening, they are called *Venti ſomniculoſi*, lazy and drowſie Winds) how doth he reprove them? *Why ſtand ye all the day idle?* waſte away ſuch precious opportunities of ſalvation? Here is the fruit of putting off God, when he offers his grace to thee: if ever thou repenteſt, it will be Gall, and Wormwood to thee, it will imbitter thy Converſion; thine heart will be wo, that thou haſt ſo long neglected him. If thou never repenteſt, it will be as the Poyſon of Aſps, and as the Gall of Dragons in thy condemnation.

V. *Who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come?* 'Tis *Vox Informantis*; a Speech of Direction, and needful Information. It inſtructs them what to think of St. *John*, and his Baptiſm; not to come to it, as to ſome new Rite, or Ceremony only; no, his buſineſs is to ſave men from Hell, to teach them the way to eſcape damnation.

Religion, 'tis a far other thing, then moſt men eſteem it. A ſlight, perfunctory performing of a few Rites, ſerve God on Sundays, and ſit before the Preacher, and give him the hearing, and have a few cold, heartleſs Wiſhes to God-ward; here is the upſhot of many mens Devotions. No; this Speech aſſures us, Religion is of far greater concernment. 'Tis not to diſpatch thy cuſtomary Rites, and to put off God with ſome ſlight obſervances: but this muſt be thy aim, how to eſcape damnation, how to ſave thy poor ſoul, how to get into God's favour, and to work out thy ſalvation. This Thought deeply ſetled, it will quicken our care, awaken our attention, enflame our Devotion: *I go to that Word, that may lead me out of Hell, and guide me to Heaven, that may teach me to eſcape the wrath to come.*

And this lets us into the ſecond Conſideration of theſe Words: And ſo we may,

Secondly, Look upon them abſolutely in themſelves: and then we may reſolve theſe Words into three Aſſertions.

I. There is *Ira ventura* Be aſſured of this, There is *Wrath to come.*

II. *Hæc Ira fugienda eſt.* This *Wrath to come* is to be fled from.

III. *Via fugæ monſtranda.* We muſt be ſhewed, and warned how to *flee from* it.

I. There is *Ira ventura.* And that's a Propoſition pregnant; it hath three Particulars:

1. There is *Ira*, there is Wrath in ſtore for impenitent Sinners. 'Tis a neceſſary Truth, what ever men think of it. Indeed ſome Heathen Philoſophers thought it an unſeemly Attribute to aſcribe to God, that he ſhould be wrathful, and angry. And ſome Hereticks conceived the God of the New-Teſtament void of all Anger. They imagined two Gods; The God of the Old-Teſtament, he was *Deus Juſtus*, a Deity ſevere and revengeful: but the God of the New-Teſtament, he was

A was *Deus Bonus*, the Good God, made all of Mercy; they would have no anger in him. No; our Faith aſcribes both to him. St. *John* tells us of *Ira Agni*. The *Lamb of God*, born as this day, is not ſo meek, and merciful; but he knows how to be angry.

1. Becauſe he is God; he muſt have anger in him. Take away rewards, and puniſhments; and you take away his Providence, by which he governs the World. God proclaims this Attribute, among his Titles of Honour, Nah. i. 2. *God is Jealous, and the* LORD *revengeth; the* LORD *revengeth, and is furious, he reſerveth wrath for his enemies.*

B 2. Becauſe he is a Juſt God; therefore he muſt be angry. *Ira*, 'tis *telum Juſtitiæ*. His wrath, 'tis the Weapon of his Juſtice. He is armed with anger to repay his enemies. Nay; even,

3. Becauſe he is a Good God; therefore he muſt be angry. Goodneſs abhors Wickedneſs. *Qui bonos diligit, & malos odit*, ſaith *Lactantius*. A Sympathy with Goodneſs breeds an Antipathy to Wickedneſs. *With the pure thou wilt be pure; and with the froward he will ſhew himſelf froward*, Pſal. xviii 26.

'Tis the high-way to Atheiſm and Prophaneneſs, to fancy to our ſelves a God made all of Mercy; that cannot conceive wrath, and
C diſpleaſure. *David* wondred, and trembled at it; *Who knows the power of thy wrath?* Pſal. xc. 11. Let us nouriſh this Thought in our heart, *Surely our God is a conſuming Fire.* That's the firſt Particular; there is *Ira*. But,

2. It is *Ira ventura*. This affords us two other. *Ventura*, 'tis in the Future. And *Ariſtotle* tells us, there is a double power in the Future; 'tis τὸ μέλλον, and τὸ ἐσόμενον.

1. This *Ira ventura*, 'tis τὸ μέλλον. 'Tis yet *to come*. The main anger of God. As yet, the preſent time, 'tis the time of God's Patience. As yet *Patientia*, 'tis *Vagina Juſtitiæ*. His anger, 'tis yet
D ſheathed up in his patience. Not, but God ſends ſome Tokens of his anger upon the World in preſent; and this woful Kingdom, 'tis a ſpectacle of it. The World would grow to open Atheiſm, believe there is no God, becauſe we feel him not. The Grand-Aſſizes be at the Laſt day: yet he keeps his Petty-Seſſions in this World; but the day of his fierce anger is yet *to come*. And this *Ira ventura* is that we ſhould moſt tremble at. We muſt be ſenſible of temporal Judgments, that God hath called for a Sword into the Land, hiſſed for a ſwarm of enemies to fall upon us. But the main Motive to Fear, and Repentance, 'tis the Anger *to come*. *Knowing the ter-*
E *rour of that day, we perſwade men.* However it fares with thee for preſent Judgment, have thy Thoughts fixed upon the Laſt great day; How ſhall I eſcape then? Temporal Judgments may fall upon good, and bad; a *righteous man* may *periſh here in his righteouſneſs*. God oftentimes puniſhes a Nation pell mell; ſweeps away his own, as well as the wicked; but the *Wrath to come*, 'tis the reprobate's portion: fear that moſt, that is the foreſt ſign of his diſpleaſure.

2. 3. 'Tis

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2. 3. 'Tis *Ira ventura* in a *ſecond* ſenſe, 'tis οὐ παρόμενον, 'tis yet *to come*; but it ſhall ſurely come. It may be delayed; but 'tis decreed. Forbearance, 'tis no forgiveneſs. This day, 'tis fixed in God's purpoſe. *He hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the World*, Acts xvii. 31. A

The Threatnings of the laſt day, they are not like the threatnings of Temporal Judgments. God often revokes thoſe Comminations. He may threaten a Judgment, and repent of it: but he hath ſealed up the day of Judgment with an Oath, *Rom.* xiv. 11. The *Jews* obſerve, that bare Threatnings may be recalled; but, if God ſwears to them, they become irrevocable. *The* LORD *hath ſworn, and will not repent.* B

Men hope of their future eſtate by their preſent condition. If they proſper here, they conclude they ſhall fare well hereafter: Or, contrary, if they be afflicted here, Oh! then they have had their Hell in this World, they look for Heaven hereafter. Theſe are fallible Conjectures. Judge of thy ſelf as the laſt Judgment ſhall finde thee, and leave thee.

That's the firſt Aſſertion, there is *Ira ventura*. The *ſecond* Aſſertion is,

II. *Hæc Ira fugienda eſt.* We muſt bethink our ſelves how to *flee* from it. Take it in theſe Particulars. C

1. *Non ſuſtinenda*; never think of undergoing of it: 'tis unſupportable. For other miſcarriages, *aut fugiendum, aut ferendum*, either avoid them, or be content to endure them. But, for this *wrath to come*, there will be neither Fortitude to reſiſt it (*Æternis ignibus contremari, nec erit, nec vocabitur Fortitudo*, Auguſt. *contra* Parmenianum) nor Cunning to avoid it, nor Patience to endure it. There is no grappling with the anger of God. *Will you provoke the* LORD *to anger, are you ſtronger then he?* 1 Cor. x. 22. There is no proportion of Strength to bear it, or Patience to endure it. If the Burden be light, or thy Strength great, or thy Patience large, ſomething may be done: Oh! but the *wrath to come*, 'tis heavy καθ' ὑπερβολὴν, ὑπὲρ δύναμιν, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks. Thy Strength then will be like the Strength of a man upon the Rack; able to feel thy pain, but not to endure it. There will be extreme impatience in extreme Torments. D

2. It muſt be *fled from*; Then 'tis *Evitabilis*. As yet it is avoidable; there is poſſibility of eſcaping: if we can hit on the right way, and have grace to uſe it, we may eſcape damnation.

1. *In poſſibilitate Naturæ.* 'Tis God's gracious dealing with mankinde, to give a reſpit 'twixt our ſin, and our puniſhment. *Peccatoribus inducias dat credendi*, ſaith the Father: He gives us time to look about us, and to provide for our ſouls. And this Favour, 'tis grounded upon the benefit of this day. Chriſt's aſſuming of our Nature, makes our Nature capable of Salvation. *Quod non eſt aſſumptum, non eſt redemptum.* God's dealing with the Angels was more peremptory, and ſevere. Their firſt fall undid them; no reprieve granted to them. But our eſtate, though miſerable, yet E

upon

upon better Terms: The *Wrath*, due to our ſins, is as yet avoidable.

2. *In poſſibilitate Vitæ.* As long, as he ſuffers us to live, there may be ſome hope: *De nemine deſperandum, quem patientia Divina ſinit vivere*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. As long, as thou art on this ſide Hell, 'tis poſſible thou mayeſt eſcape it.

3. *In poßibilitate Gratiæ.* As long as the day of Grace ſhines upon thee. Theſe two, the Day of Life, and the Day of Grace (like the Natural, and Artificial day) the laſting of theſe two days make the eſcape poſſible. 'Tis evitable; as yet God is entreatable, and ſin pardonable, and Hell-Fire avoidable.

3. 'Tis *Evitanda per fugam.* The Way to eſcape it, is to *flee from* it. And fleeing, we know, 'tis a motion of Nature, that carries us away from danger, that beſets us. And, if it be ſuch, as will do us good, it will be qualified with theſe Conditions.

1. It muſt be a timely Motion. Flight, 'tis no lingerer; in caſe of miſchief approaching, delay is dangerous. If we linger, and loyter, a ſuddain ſurprizal may prevent us. Did we know when this day would come, we might take time accordingly; but *it is hid from our eyes.*

The *Jews* have a Rule, that *If a man vows any ſervice to God before he dies, he muſt do it preſently; becauſe he may die preſently.* The Wings of the morning are fitteſt for flight. As it was with *Lot*'s flight out of *Sodom*, 'twas before day; the Sun was but riſing, when he entred into *Zoar*, *Gen.* xix. 23. And it coſt his Sons dear for loytering in *Sodom*. When God rains fire, and brimſtone, he rains ſnares withal to catch, and hold us: there will be no eſcaping, *Pſal.* xi. 6. Firſt a ſhowre of ſnares to detain us; then a ſtorm of brimſtone, to conſume, and deſtroy us.

2. Flight, 'tis a ſwift motion full of ſpeed, and celerity. As, if we delay, this wrath may ſurprize us; ſo, if we be ſlow-paced, it may overtake us. We muſt be like thoſe, that paſs over the Waſhes, they are all upon the ſpur; leſt the Tide come upon them. This flight from the danger of Hell, it muſt be *volatus Aquilæ*, not *ſaltus Cicadæ*. See St. *Paul*'s pace, διώκω, ἐπεκτεινόμενος, Phil. iii. *I follow after, I reach forth, and preſs forward.* What haſte made the *Syrians* when they fled from a ſuppoſed danger? They flung off their Garments in the way, parted with all incumbrances. *Prepare thy Chariot*, ſaith *Elijah*, *that the rain ſtay thee not.* *Rev.* vi. 8. there Death and Hell are deſcribed, coming in full ſpeed, mounted on Horſe-back: then ask *Jeremie*'s Queſtion, Chap. xii. 5. *Canſt thou out-run or eſcape theſe Horſe-men?*

3. Flight is a motion of length, and diſtance, it ſets us far away from the thing we *flee from. Stay not in the Plain*, ſaid the Angel to *Lot*; but *flee to the Mountains.* Κίνδυνος, ſaith *Ariſtotle*, 'tis φοβερὰ πλησιασμός. While we are near a miſchief, we are in danger of it. *Nemo diu tutus, periculo proximus.* If we will needs be removing; yet Satan will perſwade us not to go far. As *Thraſimundus* the *Arrian*,

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Arrian, when he turned out the Orthodox Biſhops, he ſent them not far from their Sees; that the nearneſs of their places might allure them to return upon his wicked conditions. A

He, that is near any Sin, is in danger to fall into it. A true Penitent muſt not verge upon the Borders of Hell, not walk upon the utmoſt brink of his Liberty. *Illicitorum veniam poſtulantem, neceſſe eſt à multis licitis abſtinere*, ſaith *Leo*. If we would be *in tuto*, we muſt go *in cauto*: not *play upon the hole of the Serpent: avoid it*, ſaith *Solomon*, *paſs by it, turn from it, come not near it*.

I come to the next Aſſertion.

III. *Via Fugæ monſtranda.* We muſt be ſhewed how to *flee from* it. Some Body muſt acquaint us with our danger, and how to eſcape it. Of our ſelves, we are, like *Jonas*, aſleep under hatches in the midſt of a Storm; Hell fire may be about our Ears, e're we ever think of it: or, like Beaſts in a Stable on fire, that will never ſtir out, or go about to eſcape it. B

So then;

1. Here is *Officium Miniſtri*, 'tis our Office to forewarn you of Hell, and to teach you to *flee from* it. Nay; 'tis the work of an Angel, to bring *Lot* out of *Sodom*, and to conduct him to *Zoar*. Happy are they, that can meet with a Guide to the *City of Refuge*, when the Avenger purſues them. C

2. Here is *Beneficium Miniſtri Evangelici*. The Miniſtry of the Goſpel, 'tis that, that teaches men to *flee from* it. The Law kindles this Fire; 'tis the Goſpel, that quenches it. *Lex operatur iram*; the Law can diſcover our danger: but 'tis the Goſpel that reſcues us. *Lex adducit ad januam; ſed Gratia intromittit in Templum.* 'Tis *Jeſus, that delivers from the wrath to come*, 1 Theſſ. i. 10.

3. Here is the καιριον of a Faithful Miniſter, ſuch as *John Baptiſt* was. He makes this his main Work to reſcue mens ſouls from the place of perdition. *We warn every man*, ſaith Saint *Paul, and teach every man, that we may preſent every man perfect before God*. Whileſt the *Phariſees* are preaching mens Souls into deſperate adventures, for their own by-ends; St. *John* aims at this, to teach them theſe two Leſſons, *fugere Gehennam, & rapere Cælum*, to eſcape Hell, and to take Heaven by violence. D

We have done with the firſt Particular of the Text, St. *John*'s Reprehenſion. Now follows,

Secondly, His ſerious and neceſſary Injunction. *Bring forth fruits therefore meet for repentance.* He makes not a ſtop, and full point at his reprehenſion; but adds a faithful, and charitable direction. He calls them Vipers; not to reproach them, but to reprove them: He denounces the *wrath to come*; not to diſmay them, but arouz them. *Severitatem, tanquam perſonam, induimus; ſed manſuetudinem intus alimus*, ſaith *Gregory*. As Chriſt did towards the obſtinate *Jews*, He looked angerly upon them: but, withal, he *mourned for the hardneſs of their hearts*, Mark iii. 5. E

It

A It ſets out to us the right way, and Method of denouncing of Judgments; Affright, and ſcare men; but paſs no peremptory ſentence upon them. *John* ſhuts he aven-gates againſt them; *ſed in poſtliminio poſuit pœnitentiam*, ſaith *Tertullian*; he places repentance to open the door to them. *Peter* thundered againſt *Simon Magus*: but, withal, gives him an inkling of mercy; *Pray that thy ſins may be forgiven thee.*

It muſt teach Miniſters to carry a ſteddy hand; when they preach Judgments: leſt, when they go to hew a Tree, they hit a man, *Deut.* xix. 5. This kinde of Doctrine, 'tis like ſtrong Phyſick; but a grain too much, may mar all. Do as careful Phyſicians do, when they give ſtrong
B Potions, have a Cordial ready, in caſe of fainting. The Law muſt be preached, as it was firſt delivered, in the hand of a Mediator, *Gal.* iii. 19. As *Gerſon* alluding to our Saviour's Transfiguration, tells us, Moſes, *and* Elias, *muſt not appear alone in our preaching, but Chriſt muſt be with them.* The good Samaritan is ready furniſhed with Wine, and Oil too; carries not Wine only about him, and ſtays for Oyl till he comes to the next Town; Like *Jehu*, flings down *Jezabel* preſently; and afterwards at leiſure take care for her Body. No; 'tis too late now; *The Dogs have devoured her.*

For the Injunction it ſelf, it ſtands upon four Particulars.

C *Firſt*, Here is the Grace, and Virtue preſcribed; that's *Repentance.*

Secondly, Here is the Effectual Practice, and Exerciſe of this Grace; there muſt be *Fruits of Repentance.*

Thirdly, Here is the Production of thoſe Fruits; they muſt be *brought forth.*

Fourthly, Here is the due Proportion, and Qualification of theſe Fruits, they muſt be *meet for repentance.*

Firſt, The Grace, and Virtue preſcribed; 'tis Repentance. 'Tis a ſpiritual Duty, beyond the reach, and compaſs of Morality. The Phi-
D loſophers never dream'd of it; among all their Virtues, they never name repentance. And, as it is Spiritual, ſo 'tis Evangelical. The Law never mentions it; that's all for Innocency, nothing for Repentance. There is no *ſecunda Tabula poſt naufragium* in that Covenant. Do all exactly, or ſuffer unavoidably, that's the Tenour of the Law. 'Tis the Goſpel, that offers, and accepts of Repentance.

To touch it briefly; See,

I. The Nature of it: and then,

II. The Virtue of it.

E I. For the Nature of it. It is a ſorrowful Confeſſion of Sin, joyned with deprecation for Pardon, and reſolution not to return to the commiſſion of it again. It hath many ſour, and ſad Ingredients; yet no more then needs muſt: nay, as little as can be. Judg of it by an humane eſtimate 'twixt man, and man.

1. Confeſſion; that's one Ingredient. Is there not reaſon, and equity for this? Wouldeſt thou pardon that man, that will not acknowledge his offence, confeſs he hath wronged thee?

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2. Contrition, and Sorrow for Sin; that's a necessary Ingredient. Is there not great equity in this too? Wouldest thou pardon an offence to him, that is not grieved, that he hath provoked thee?

3. Deprecation for Pardon; that's a third Ingredient. Is there not good reason for this too? Who forgives that man, that scorns to seek, and sue for remission?

4. Resolution not to sin again; that's a great Ingredient. There is much equity in this also. Who forgives him that will not promise to do so no more, not to offend hereafter?

No more of the Nature of it: Now,

II. For the Virtue of this Prescription. You may judg of that, by the Patients, to whom St. *John* prescribes it, *O generation of Vipers, bring forth fruits meet for repentance.* It is able to change, and alter, and convert Vipers. Vipers, they are odious, and venemous, and mischievous Creatures; yet see, Repentance belongs to such, they may get good by it. As the Father saith of God, *He is not a* Jupiter, *but a* Jehovah; *not a bare helper, but an All-sufficient Saviour:* So is this his Prescription. 'Tis not for less ails only; but for the most deadly diseases. St. *Peter* will undertake to cure *Simon Magus*, a Sorcerer, if he will take this Antidote. *David*'s Adultery, and *Peter*'s Perjury, and *Paul*'s Blasphemy, all perfectly cured, and done away by repentance. See what Cures it wrought at *Corinth*, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. *Fornicators, Adulterers, Idolaters, Sodomites; such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified.* It will turn Monsters of Vice into Miracles of Virtue. Thus *Chrysostom* breaks forth into admiration of these Cures upon those Words of the Psalm, *Narrabo mirabilia: Quæ mirabilia? quòd facit ex adultero castum, ex avaro liberalem, ex crudeli misericordem.* Here is the change of the *right hand of the most High.* Here is the Sovereign Virtue of Repentance.

I pass to the next; which is,

Secondly, The effectual Practice, and Exercise of this Grace. He requires fruits of Repentance; Fruits, that's Works. St. *Paul* expounds it so, *Act.* xxvi. 20. *I have shewed unto them, that they should repent, and do works meet for repentance.* Works of Repentance, they are Fruits of Repentance. These good Works are called *Fruits of Repentance.*

I. Because Repentance, 'tis a vital Grace, active, and operative: no still, quiet quality, and habit of the minde; but stirring, and working. 'Tis a true saying in the School, *Habitus non salvant, sed actus:* Without these holy actions, all your good qualities will stand you in no stead. The voice of *Rachel*, 'tis the voyce of Repentance; *Give me children, or I die:* it longs to be fruitful.

II. He calls for *Fruits of Repentance*, that adds a second: they must be *actus positivi*, something is to be done, and performed by us. Repentance, 'tis not only a mortifying Grace; but quickening, and enlivening. A bare Negative repentance will not serve the turn. Repentance doth both dead, and kill the root of Sin; and then implants a new Principle of Life, that will spring, and fructifie. *Cease to do evil, and*

A *and learn to do well*, ſaith *Eſai*. And ſo St. *Peter*; *That we being dead unto ſin, may live unto righteouſneſs*. When God created the Trees, he created them fruitful, *Let the earth bring forth the fruit-tree, yielding fruit*.

Of all others, God cannot endure an unfruitful Chriſtian. He is planted in the Garden of God. A man will let other Trees grow in his Field, or Medows; but he will plant none but Fruit-trees in his Garden, or Orchard. Indeed, a Chriſtian is good for nothing, but for fruit. Thus the Church, 'tis compared to a Vine; there comes no other good of it, but only Fruit. Ezek. xv. 23. *What is the Vine-tree good*
B *for? ſhall wood be taken of it, to do any work?* it affords no Timber, not ſo much as a pin of wood can be made of it: 'tis only the fruit that makes it commendable.

III. Theſe Works of Repentance, they are called Fruits; becauſe they are ſuch works, as are uſeful, and fruitful; there is good comes of them: whereas ſins are called *unfruitful works*, Epheſ. v. 11. Thus *Paul* enforces fruitfulneſs in good works, *Theſe things are good, and profitable to men*, Tit. iii. 8. And again, *Let ours learn to maintain good Works, that they be not unfruitful*. Every Penitent muſt be an *Oneſimus*, like St. *Paul*'s Convert, as his Name betokens, he muſt be
C Profitable. 'Tis *Luther*'s Obſervation upon that in the *Galathians*, *The deeds of the fleſh are manifeſt*, and then he adds, the *Fruits of the Spirit: Mark*, ſaith he, *he calls good Works* the fruits of the Spirit: *but evil Works he calls not* fruits, *but only* deeds of the Fleſh: *they are not fruitful, and beneficial*.

IV. *Good Works* are called *Fruits of Repentance*; even though properly, and immediately they proceed from ſome other Graces. The reaſon is, becauſe repentance is one of thoſe prime Graces, that are imperative, and predominant, and commanding Graces; ſuch, as do not only elicite, and exerciſe their own actions, but they have a power
D to employ other Virtues, and ſet them on working.

Thus Faith, that's a predominant commanding Grace; the acts of all kind of Virtues are attributed to it, Heb. xi. So Love, that's a predominant Grace, it ſets other Graces on work. 1 Cor. xiii. 7. *It bears all things, it believes all things, it hopes all things*. Such a Grace, is Repentance; like the firſt wheel, or ſpring in a Clock; like the *Tree of Life*, it *bears twelve manner of fruits*. It will work upon every faculty, quicken every Grace, provoke to every good Duty, and fructifie in all the works of Piety.

V. Saint *John* calls for *fruits of repentance*; 'tis a full Word, a
E Term of perfection, and maturity. There are ſome things, that tend towards Repentance, but yet come ſhort of this pitch of Perfection.

1. There be *Signa Pœnitentiæ*, ſome certain Signs of Repentance, that do accompany it, and yet may be without it. *Ahab*, he rent his cloathes, and wore ſack-cloth, and went ſoftly, in a mourning manner; but there was no true repentance. The *Ninevites*, they faſted, and

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put on ſack-cloth too, and withal they repented: but God's eye was not on theſe ſigns; but on the fruits of Repentance. 'Tis not ſaid, God ſaw their faſting, and ſack-cloth: but *God ſaw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and he had mercy on them.* A

2. There are *Initialia Pœnitentiæ*, ſome Profers of Repentance; but yet not full Fruits. Some ſudden pangs of ſorrow, ſome ſhiverings, and grudings of Repentance; as it was with *Felix*, a qualm came over his conſcience: but theſe often fail, and come not to maturity; ὐ τελεσφορεῦσι, ſaith Chriſt, they *come not to perfection.* St. *Auguſtine* preſſes this Point upon our ſudden Motions: *Si gemis, parturi, ſi parturis, pari.* Be not alwayes in travel; but *bring forth* ſomething. B

3. There are ſome *Actus formati Pœnitentiæ*; as inward Compunction, deteſtation of what is paſt, good reſolutions for time to come. This is *radix Pœnitentiæ*; here is the root and ſap of Repentance: but yet St. *John* goes farther, requires fruits, that our lives, and works, and converſation, ſhould teſtifie our repentance. *Qui maturitatis fructum quærit, deſpicit amœna camporum: grati flores, ſed gratior panis*, ſaith the Father. The Spring is pleaſant; but the Husbandman looks for Harveſt. 'Tis that, which crowns the year; when the Fields ſtand thick with corn. A Chriſtian muſt not be *Earinus*; but *Oporinus*: not always blooming, and bloſſoming; but fruitful, and *abundant in the work of the* LORD. C

I proceed to the next particular; which is,

Thirdly, The Production of this *Fruit*; 'tis called here a *Bringing forth.* The word is ποιῆν. A full, ſignificant Word, it carries Emphaſis with it, and it imports three things;

I. Ποιήσατε, 'Tis a Verb Active; and ſo it imports the Activity of our repentance. And that, which I note from it, is this; *A Chriſtian muſt be an Agent in the work of repentance, not meerly Paſſive.* There is a ſorrow, and anguiſh for ſin, wherein a man is a meer Patient. So it fared with *Judas*: 'tis ſaid, *he repented*, Mat. xxvii. 3. Sorrow did eat, and gnaw at his heart, full ſore againſt his will. We may miſtake theſe checks, and remorſe of Conſcience, for the motions of repentance. *Dolor morbi* is one thing, and *dolor medicinæ* another; 'tis one thing to be ſick of a diſeaſe, that's againſt our will; another thing to be Phyſick-ſick: we apply our ſelves to that. A true Penitent is active, provokes, and ſtirs up his heart to ſorrow, ſearches out his ſins, call's them to remembrance, afflicts himſelf for them, prays that he may ſorrow: grieves that he cannot grieve; never repents, that he hath repented. D

That's the firſt, the Activity of Repentance. Again,

II. Ποιήσατε, *Bring forth*, it imports a ſecond thing; that's the Propriety. It requires our own perſonal performance of repentance. We muſt have Fruits, and they muſt be fruits of our own bringing forth. I obſerve it againſt the uſual practice of the Church of *Rome* in this point of repentance. They are for Fruits; but, if you have none of your own, they can help you with ſome. *Ite ad vendentes*; you may buy them, or borrow them, or beg them of others. They Teach, E

there

A there are ſome *Opera pœnalia*, ſome Penitential works, that you may have others to do for you, and yet ſerve as well, as if you did them your ſelf. And they have good ſtore of ſuch fruits: and the Pope, you know, he hath his Fruiterers, that cry them up and down the Countrey. The *Marcionites* taught *vicarium Baptiſma*, and theſe Teach *Vicariam Pœnitentiam*. Theſe could be baptized, and theſe can repent by a Proxie, and ſubſtitute. And, I fear, there are many amongſt us, that like well enough of this point of Popery. We hope, there are ſome Devout men, that pray, and repent in theſe days of judgment; and we hope to fare the better for them; though we re-
B pent not. No; we can neither borrow, nor buy, either Oyl, or Olives. 'Tis ποιήσατε, not μετανοήσατε. We muſt *bring forth fruits* our ſelves; not purchaſe them of others. Repentance, 'tis the Phyſick of the Soul; was it ever heard, that one man took Phyſick for another, and procured him health by it?

III. There is yet one thing more in ποιήσατε, it imports the reality of our repentance. 'Tis one thing *agere*, and another thing *facere*. To do a thing is one thing; to make a thing is another. Repentance, in St. *John*'s Dialect, 'tis *Habitus factivus*. There are ſome actions, that, when they are over, leave nothing behinde them: but making
C produces ſome real effect. And ſuch muſt be our repentance; not a ſudden, tranſient, vaniſhing repentance, like *Ezekiel*'s Muſick, Chap. xxxiii. 32. *Thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and plays well on an Inſtrument; for they hear thy words, but do them not.* Sweet Airs begetting good motions for the time; but there's nothing comes of it. Repentance muſt work ſome real, and permanent effect in us: it muſt make an impreſſion upon our Soul, work a change, and effectual alteration in us, ſet our hearts, and lives in a new frame of Obedience, that we may be ſaid to be quite other men.

D The laſt Particular remains, with which I will conclude;

That is,

Fourthly, The Proportion, and Qualification of theſe fruits; they muſt be *meet for repentance*. 'Tis not every kind of fruit, that will beſeem repentance. 'Tis *Gregorie*'s Obſervation, *Alii fructus decent innocentiam, alii pœnitentiam*. That meaſure of Obedience, that will paſs for an innocent man, will not be accepted from one that is penitent. God expects much more from him. How then ſhall we make a due eſtimate of the fitneſs of theſe *fruits of repentance?* We may make a double Eſtimate of them.

E The firſt a Poſitive.

The ſecond a Comparative.

I. In a Poſitive Eſtimate, the fruits may be judged meet, and beſeeming Repentance, if they be thus conditioned.

1. For their Nature; they muſt be ſerious, and ſubſtantial, and weighty works. They muſt be *inter βαρύτερα τῦ νόμυ*, as our Saviour ſpeaks, the great, and weighty Works of Piety. Repentance, 'tis a ſad work,

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work, and must not have slight, and perfunctory expressions. A true Penitent will stick at no labour, or cost; enquires with them in *Micah*, *Wherewith shall I appear before God?* And the Prophet directs us to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. See the Works St. *John* prescribes to the Penitents, Luke iii. cloathing the naked, feeding the hungry, forbearing oppression. So *Esai* tells us, in these Addresses to God, we must not present him with a bundle of Bul-rushes for our penitential fruits; he prescribes, and expects other-gess performances

2. These Fruits must be *meet for repentance* in their kinde. Take it in a double Notion;

1. By way of Contrariety, and Opposition. The Duties, that are contrary to the sins we repent of, they are seasonable Works, and *meet for repentance*. A true Penitent will avoid every sin; but chiefly he hath his eye at that sin which proved his ruin, and will set himself to the practice of the contrary Virtue. As men, that have been sick upon some surfeit, will keep a general good Diet; but, above all, abstain from the meat that hurt them. *Ea specialiter horreas, quæ specialiter appetebas*, saith St. *Bernard*. Turn thy longing into loathing. *Aquam, fluentem in cloacam, deducas in hortum*, saith St. *Augustine*. This is done,

2. By way Imitation, and Holy emulation, by transforming of sin into a spiritual Virtue. As St. *Paul* exhorts; *Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the Spirit*, take your fill of that. So St. *John*, *Do violence to no man*; but *Take heaven by violence. Hæc vis Deo grata est.*

We should thus emulate, and imitate our sins, as the *Philistines* did their punishments. 'Twas not every Oblation would serve; but they would imitate, and express their plagues in the choice of their Offerings. They were annoyed with Mice, and Emerods: they make golden Mice, and golden Emerods, and send them for a Trespass offering to the God of *Israel*. Addict thy self to an holy covetousness, to an heavenly ambition, to an unsatiable thirsting after spiritual things. This is *indoles, & ingenium Pœnitentiæ*, to appease our God with services suitable to our sins, and offences.

3. These Fruits must be *meet for repentance* in their Measure. One Measure may serve for an innocent man; but a greater will be expected from him that is penitent. 'Tis not every scantling, that will go for a penitential work. Others may sell by the Strike; but 'tis heaped measure that befits repentance.

A true Penitent aims at three proportions, over and above the ordinary size of a good Duty.

1. The first is a Proportion of a fit Compensation. He labours to do as much in the right way, as he did in the wrong. *Paul* enforces this, *Rom.* vi. 19. *As you have yielded your members servants, and weapons to uncleanness; so yield your members weapons, and servants*

to

A *to righteousness.* They must be ὅπλα, weapons for righteousness, as well as for sin. We must not be *armati peccatores, & inermes sancti*; not strong Sinners, and feeble Saints. And they must be ὅπλα, servants to God, as they have been to sin; not binde our selves to a trade of Sin, and use Religion only as a recreation.

2. He aims at a Proportion of Amerciament. A Penitent must do more then ordinary, to amerce, and afflict, and punish, and to take revenge upon himself for his former mis-doings. That's one reason, why *Paul*, took such pains, out-wrought all the Apostles; *I laboured more then all*, because he had been a Persecutor, 1 *Cor.*
B xv. 9. *Thus*, saith *Chrysostom*, David *punished himself for lusting, by denying himself the enjoyment of a natural longing for the Waters of* Bethlehem. He will practice not only sobriety, but austerity; put himself under a more severe discipline, and abridg himself of lawful delights for his unlawful pleasures.

3. There is yet a third Proportion; that's a Proportion of Redemption. A Penitent must redeem his former omissions by a double diligence. Compensation doth as much good, as it did evil; but redemption exacts twice as much. He, that loytered in a journey,
C must double his pace; he must do as much in a short time, as others have done in a long. It is called the *restoring of the years of the Grasshopper, and Canker-worm*, when the fruits of one year are sufficient for two. When Husbandmen break up their Grounds, that have long lain fallow, they look for great encrease, a double crop, to satisfie for the former barrenness. Repentance sends us to God, as *Jacob* did his sons the second time into *Egypt*; *Carry double money in your hands*, enough to quit the old score, and to make new provision.

There is yet the other Estimate of this Meetness; and that is,

II. Comparative. And this Comparison must be 'twixt the Fruits
D of our Sins, and the Fruits of our Repentance.

There are three Bitter Fruits, three noysom malignities in Sin.

1. It steams upward, in the Dishonour of God.
2. It soaks inward, in a sensual Delight.
3. It taints all about it, in evil Example to others.

Suitable to all these three, thou must proportion thy Repentance.

1. Consider how greatly thou hast dishonoured thy God, and impaired his glory: God expects reparation of his honour at thy hands. This Fruit is remarkable in St. *Paul*'s repentance. He was a Blasphemer, and compelled others to blaspheme; see what reparation he makes
E of God's honour after his conversion, Gal. i. 23. *He, that persecuted us in times past, now he preacheth the Faith, which before he destroyed, and they glorified God in me.* God gains as much glory by St. *Paul*, as he suffered blasphemy. *Ex Lupo fit ovis*, saith St. *Augustine*. Nay, more then so, *Ex Lupo fit Pastor*, of a Wolf he becomes not only a Sheep, but a Shepherd. He will do God as much service now, as he had done him dishonour, and disservice before.

2. Th o

Serm. V.

2. Thou must proportion thy repentance according to thy delight, and pleasure in sin; sorrow as deeply, as thou hast sinned dēlightfully; shew as much detestation of it, as thou hast found delectation in it. Use thy sin, as *Amnon* did his *Tamar*; he loathed her more, then ever he loved her. We must both as much sorrow for sin, as we had delight in it; and as much delight in Piety, as we have taken pleasure in Iniquity. St. *Augustine* points at it; there must be *dolor de peccato*, and *gaudium de dolore*. And it must be down weight; not an ounce of spiritual for a pound of carnal delight, and pleasure.

3. Take measure at the third Malignity, thy Scandal to others. Hath thy ill example emboldened others to sin? let thy good example draw others to repentance. 'Tis *Conversus, confirma fratres*. *Peter* had subverted them by his sin; he must convert them by his example. *David* vowed this fruit of his Repentance, *I will teach transgressours thy way, and sinners shall be converted unto thee*. He had been a publick scandal, he will make himself a publick example, and spectacle of repentance. He took care no man should abuse his example any more, removed that stumbling block out of the way, as they did the dead body of *Amasa*, from hindering the People. He wrote a σκλανδικον against himself; penned, and published a Psalm of his Repentance.

These Conditions, and Proportions, observed, will qualifie our Fruits, make them *meet for repentance*. They will be ἄξιοι, if they be ἀνάξιοι. Put them in the same balance with thy sins: if they turn the scale, and preponderate, they will be accepted, provided that thy balance be true. It must be *aurificis trutina, non statera popularis*. Or, as *Augustine* expresses it, *We must not go to our Neighbours Scales, but to the King's Standard*. And yet, to help our defects, St. *Bernard* shews us that Beam of the Sanctuary, where allowances are made, alluding to that saying of *Job*, *Oh, that I were weighed in a Balance! If thou wilt put thy self to this Trial*, saith he, *Statera* must be *crux Christi*. His Merits, and satisfaction, can infinitely weigh down both our sins, and our sufferings.

Now, let us beseech him, who is the God of all Grace, the worker, and author of Repentance, that he would frame our hearts to a sorowful bewailing our own sins, and the sins of the Land, and to a plentiful increase in all fruits of repentance; that, being partakers of that Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, and, as this day, appeared to us, we may deny ungodliness, and Worldly lusts, and live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present World, *abounding in all the fruits of holiness, which are by Jesus Christ, to his praise, and glory. This be grant for his Son's sake, our Lord, and blessed Saviour; To whom,* &c.

A Sermon

A SERMON *Preached in* LENT.

ACTS ii. 37.

Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, *and to the rest of the Apostles, Men, and Brethren, What shall we do?*

THIS Passage of Scripture, from the Words I have read, to the end of the Chapter, contains a relation of a famous Conversion to the *Christian Faith*, wrought by the Preaching of the Apostle Saint *Peter*. And it worthily deserves our best attention, as being an Example propounded in Scripture for our imitation.

Such stories as this, are recorded in God's Book, not as bare Narrations, what others have done: but they carry with them the use and force of a powerfull Direction; and they speak to every one of us in our Saviours Language, *Luke* x. 37. *Abi tu, & fac similiter.* Transform thy self into the Example of this holy Conversion.

And, if we take a particular view of it, we shall finde it very remarkable in the several parts and passages of it.

First, It is remarkable, and worth our observing, in the very first Order of it. 'Tis the first Conversion, that was wrought by the Apostles in the *Christian Church*; the first draught that Saint *Peter* made, after he was fully Authorized, and sent by Christ to be a *Fisher of men: Primitiæ Evangelii*, the First-fruits of the Gospel; the first handfull of ripe ears of Corn offered up to God to sanctifie the whole Harvest; the goodly bunch of *Eshol* gathered by these first spies, the Apostles,

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betokening, and assuring the Churches fruitfulness. The Church may say to these Converts, what *Jacob* said to *Reuben* his eldest Son: *Thou art my First-born, my Might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of power, and the excellency of dignity is found in you.*

'Twas an high Prerogative, and title of Honour, that St. *Paul* gives to his beloved *Epinetus*, Rom. xvi. 5. *He is the first-fruits of* Achaia *unto Christ.* These Converts here carry away the dignity of Birth-right from all other Churches; which made the after-Churches of the *Gentiles* yield the honour of precedency to this Church of *Jerusalem.* She is called *Matrix Ecclesiæ* by the ancient Fathers; the Eldest Sister, nay, the *Metropolis*, the Mother of all other Churches. *Andronicus*, and *Junia*'s Commendations are due from other Christians unto these Converts; they *were of note among the Apostles, and were in Christ before us.*

That's the first Consideration, 'tis *Prima Conversio.*

Secondly, It is remarkable for the Time, and Season, when these Converts embrace the Faith, and profess Religion. We all know, 'twas a sad time of Persecution. This *Sect* (as they call it) was at this time *every where spoken against*, Acts xxviii. 22. In the time of Peace, and when the Sun-shine of Prosperity graces Religion, when Christianity grows into fashion, and is in request, 'tis no such great matter to become a Disciple; but, when 'tis *seculi reatus*, the great Crime of the World to be a Christian, all men oppose it, and cry it down, then resolutely to profess it, makes such a Conversion far more honourable. *Feliciùs nos, sed fortiùs isti.* We, under a *Constantine*, believe more *happily*; but these, under an *Herod*, and *Pilate*, believe more *resolutely.*

'Twas the great praise of *Moses*'s Faith, that he joyned to the *people of God in their affliction*, was not afraid, nor ashamed of the rebuke of Christ, but gloried in it. He is a Christian of some worth, that will not only follow Christ into *Jerusalem*, when all sing *Hosanna*; then hold up his Train, when he goes in Triumph: but that will stick to him, when they cast him out of *Jerusalem*; follow him to *Golgotha*, when they cry, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*, and bear up his Cross.

Canst thou endure the threatnings of the world? saith *Chrysostom*; *Si credideris, omnes odio te habebunt.* If thou believest, all men will hate thee, and persecute thee; doth not that deterr thee? Thou art a right-bred Christian. That was observable in the condition of these mens Conversion, and makes it remarkable.

Thirdly, It is remarkable in the Condition, and Quality of the Persons: A mixed, confused company of men, strangely disposed, and affected before their Conversion. They run together, and flock about the Apostles, with no very religious purpose; but meerly to gaze, and wonder at them, they come together *to see some strange sight*, Verse 7. Nay, worse than so, they fall a scoffing, and deriding the Apostles, they mock at them, saying, *These men are full of new Wine*; they had been at the *Wine*, taken a *cup too much*, that made them so talkative; nay, the whole company of them were guilty of murthering our Saviour, they

A they had imbrued their hands in his precious blood. Saint *Peter* charges them with it, *Verſe* 23. A ſtrange company of men, unlikely to be converted; *Lord, can theſe dead bones live?* Is there hope, that ſuch ſinners as theſe, ſhould ever repent? Yes, St. *Peter* aſſails them, and prevails with them, wins them to Religion, and gains them to Chriſt. A glorious Converſion! *Monſtra Vitiorum, in miracula Virtutum.* Here are Monſters of Vice turned into Miracles of Vertue. We may well admire this work, as *Bernard* did the Converſion of Saint *Paul*; *O magnitudinem miſericordiæ, O efficaciam gratiæ!* O the greatneſs of God's Mercy that he would! and, O the power of Chriſt's Grace,
B that it could reclaim, and convert ſuch Converts, as theſe!

That's the third, the Condition of the Perſons.

Fourthly, It is remarkable in the great Number, and Multitude of Converts. Not ſome one, or ſome few liſten to Saint *Peter*, and yield to him; though that had been much, out of ſuch a rabble, and crue, to ſave any: but ſee here, a mighty Converſion; *Three thouſand* ſouls gain'd to God by Saint *Peter*'s Sermon. *Lord, we have laboured all night, and catched nothing.* Saint *Peter*'s Net is filled with ſouls at the firſt caſting of it. *Who are theſe, that come flying as a cloud, and as a full flock of Doves to their Windows?* Eſai. lx. 8. Here is an
C overflowing Spring-tide of Piety, and Religion. *My ſoul longs for the firſt-ripe Grapes*, ſaith God in the *Prophet*. See, here is not *racematio*, but *vindemia*; not a Cluſter, or two, but a plentifull Vintage. Such was the power of Religion in thoſe Primitive Times; ſo *mightily grew the Word, and prevailed.*

Fifthly, It is remarkable for the complete, entire fulneſs of their Converſion. We may ſee here an exact form of Converſion: Religion hath here a perfect work in them. They are no *Agrippaes*, half-Chriſtians, almoſt-Believers; you may diſcern all the members, and lineaments of the *New-man* fairly framed in them.

D *Firſt*, They are perplexed, and troubled for their ſins, *pricked at their heart.* They are the Throwes, and Pangs of the *New-birth*, the firſt ſtep to Converſion.

Secondly, They repent, and believe, and are baptized; that's the ſecond.

Thirdly, They are diligent, and conſtant in all the Duties of God's Service, and Worſhip: *Verſe* 24. *They continue ſtedfaſt in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and fellowſhip*; in the Sacrament, and Prayer.

Fourthly, Their Religion is not confined to the Church only, but they are fruitfull in all works of Charity, and Alms to the Poor;
E *Verſe* 45.

Fifthly, and laſtly, They live together in all Chriſtian Love and Amity, *Verſe* 46. Here's an exact pattern of a through-converſion, a complete, and perfect Frame of an holy Church.

My Text contains the firſt *member*, and ſtep of their *converſion*; that's the *perplexity of their ſpirit*, into which they were caſt upon ſight of their ſins. A Meditation never untimely; but now moſt ſuitable,

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and ſeaſonable for this time of repentance. And repentance, we know, 'tis the Medicine, and Phyſick of a ſick, ſinfull Soul: that, by which the Soul of man diſtemper'd, and ſurfeited by ſin, is cured, and recovered; 'tis that, which ſtirrs, and purges thoſe noyſom humours, with which the Conſcience is clogg'd, and ſurcharg'd; and ſo, by God's inſtitution, 'tis that neceſſary Preparative, that fits, and diſpoſes the ſoul for the ſovereign Cure by our Saviour's Blood. A

And, as in bodily Cures, we content not our ſelves with bare Rules, and Preſcripts: but deſire to know how the Phyſick hath wrought upon others before, to ſee the *Probatums*, what Cures have been wrought in the right uſe of it: ſo likewiſe 'tis uſefull to take notice of thoſe happy Penitents, that have found good by it, and were recovered; and to conſider the fearfull miſcarriages of others, whoſe ſorrows, and pangs of Repentance, have proved diſmal, and deadly. B

And here we have, in the very entrance of this ſtory, two pregnant examples; *Judas*, that betrayed our Saviour; and theſe *Jews*, that crucified him. Both ſick of the ſame Diſeaſe; but theſe are recovered by repentance, and are received to mercy. The Phyſick was ſtrong, and painfull; but it wrought kindly, had its proper work with them. And *Judas*, he repents too, falls into much ſorrow and heavineſs; but it works too ſtrongly with him, rents his heart-ſtrings, fetches up his bowels, haſtens, and brings upon him a fearfull deſtruction. C

Either example of Sorrow is uſefull; *triſte, ſed ſalubre exemplum*: it cannot but aſtoniſh the prophaneſt ſinner, and ſtrike him with horror. As when the People ſaw *Amaſa* wallowing in his blood in the midſt of the way, they all ſtood ſtill at that ghaſtly ſight, and *Joab* was fain to remove the body out of the way, ere they would go forward: So, let a Sinner be in the hotteſt purſuit of any ſin, when he ſees the ſouls of theſe Penitents weltering in their Gore, 'twill ſtop his cariere, and the Devil deſires to remove theſe ſpectacles of ſorrow out of our ſight, leſt they hinder our purſuit in the ways of ſin. D

Nay, let us view, and conſider well of them. *Juſtus, cùm viderit vindictam, lavabit veſtigia in ſanguine peccatorum*; as *Gregory* Moralizes that place of the Pſalmiſt. We ſhould waſh our foot-ſteps in the blood, that flows from theſe wounded Penitents. As Phyſicians do, they will beg the bodies of ſome dead men for uſe of Anatomies: So let us make uſe of theſe mortified Penitents; not bury them preſently; but ſtudy to rip up, and anatomize their Conſcience, and ſo learn the frame, and diſpoſition of our own.

For the Words themſelves, they repreſent unto us the anguiſh, and perplexity, into which theſe Converts were caſt: and in them obſerve theſe three Particulars: E

Firſt, The Means, that wrought this trouble, and perplexity: that's the Sermon of *St. Peter: When they heard this.*

Secondly, The Anguiſh it ſelf that's wrought in them; the ſpirit of Compunction hath ſeized upon their Souls; *They are prickt at their heart.*

Thirdly,

A Thirdly, The Courſe they took for eaſe, and relief; they repair to the Apoſtles, crave their direction: *Men, and Brethren, What ſhall we do?*

Firſt, Is the Means, that wrought this anguiſh, and compunction; 'tis St. *Peter*'s Sermon: *When they heard this.* The Text tells us of a wound, that was given them, that pierced their heart. Here we ſee both the Weapon, that made it; and the place, where it entred. The Weapon, that's the ſword of the Spirit: the word of God in St. *Peter*'s Sermon: of that anon. The entrance it makes, 'tis by the Ear.

In Bodily Strokes, he, that means to hit the Heart, muſt take ano-
B ther aim; not run his Weapon in at the Ear: but he, that means to wound the Heart ſpiritually, his directeſt paſſage is through the Ear. In this caſe, there is an immediate conveyance from the Ear to the Heart. *Gladius in ore, & vulnus per aurem*, ſuit well together. *The ſword, that proceeds out of the mouth*, Revel. i. 16. hath it's proper entrance in at the Ear. What *Peter* did raſhly at another time, he doth here ſeaſonably, and with great advice. When he would wound *Malchus*, he ſtruck at his Ear; now, that he deſires to pierce the Inwards, and to hit the Heart-vein of his Auditours, he ſtrikes at the Ear, by it he conveys his Weapons to their inward Parts.

C This Senſe of Hearing, 'tis the main Inlet of all ſaving knowledg. *Auris, animæ os*; ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. The Ear, 'tis the Mouth of the Soul, whether for Meat, or Medicine, for our firſt Converſion, or for after Inſtruction. Hence Repentance 'tis called *the opening of the ear*; Job xxxiii. 16. *He opens the ears of men, and ſeals their Inſtruction.*

The truth is, an attentive Ear, 'tis a neceſſary advantage, that muſt be given to the work of Converſion. St. *Peter* makes this his firſt requeſt, Verſe 14. *Ye men of* Iſrael, *hearken unto my words.* And the Reaſon is evident; for as all other works of Grace, ſo this of Compunction, 'tis not any inbred thing in us; but muſt be conveyed from
D without, by theſe knowing, and teaching, and apprehenſive ſenſes. Men may as well expect good Corn on their land without plowing, and ſowing; as true ſorrow, and repentance, without hearing, and attending. May be, ſome qualms, and riſings of Conſcience poſſibly of our ſelves; but they are all ἐώντα, windy and falſe, and ſubventaneous conceptions, never come to good. He, that will be a true Penitent, a ſound, and ſerious Convert, muſt bow his ear to inſtruction, offer his attention, as young *Samuel* did. *Speak LORD, for thy ſervant heareth. Liſten, and your ſouls ſhall live*; ſaith the Prophet *Eſay*.

The paſſage, and entrance then, it is the Ear; but what's the
E Weapon St. *Peter* uſes to pierce, and wound them? That will appear to us in theſe three gradual Apprehenſions.

Firſt, 'Tis *Verbum Dei*. The weapon, that wounds them, 'tis the *Word of God*.

Secondly, 'Tis *Verbum convictivum*; 'tis a Word of Reproof, and conviction. He doth ἐλέγχει ἀκονήμως, he uſes a ſharp, and quick, and cutting Reprehenſion.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, 'Tis *Verbum convictivum de his peccatis*; 'tis a word convincing of ſome more remarkable and ſpecial ſins, of which they were guilty. A

Firſt, God's Word in the general, that's the Means, that works this compunction, that's the choice, ſanctified Inſtrument appointed by God for this ſacred work. The ſpeaking to exhortation, and doctrine, is the way to convince, and convert Souls. 'Twas not the Apoſtles ſpeaking of Languages, *Verſe 6.* that wrought this work; though that was a divine, and glorious thing, the moſt mocked at it, the beſt did wonder at it, it had no further effect in them. But, let St. *Peter* come, and preach to them, lay open the Scriptures; that's powerfull, and prevalent, that takes them preſently. *If ye ſpeak ſtrange Languages*, ſaith St. *Paul*, they will ſay, *ye are mad*: or, as theſe blaſphemed, they were *gone with drink*: but, if *ye prophefie*, a ſinner is convinced, and judged, and will confeſs that *God ſpeaks in you*, 1 Cor. xiv. 23, 24, 25. B

This ſacred Ordinance hath a ſecret unavoidable Power over the ſoul. As *Origen* compares it, *Sicut naturalis attractus eſt magneti ad ferrum, bitumini ad ignem; ſic animæ ad verbum.* As the Load-ſtone draws Iron, and Brimſtone catches Fire, and kindles preſently; ſo the ſoul quickly receives impreſſion from the Word of God.

The Scripture ſets out the vertue of it by many expreſſions. It hath the force of an Hammer, that can *break rocks in pieces*, Jer. xxiii. 29. It enflames like Fire; *did not our hearts burn within us, when he opened to us the Scriptures?* Luke xxiv. 32. It pierces like an Arrow: *Thine Arrows are ſharp in the hearts of thine enemies*, Pſal. xlv. 5. *Tertullian* and *Auguſtine*, expound that place of the *force of the Scriptures*. It hath the ſharpneſs of a Sword; nay, 'tis *gladius biceps, Rhomphæa bis acuta*, it cuts both wayes. It hath a killing power in it; it ſlew St. *Paul*, laid him for a *dead man*. Rom. vii. 13. *He ſmites the Earth with the rod of his Mouth, and with the breath of his Lips doth he ſlay the Nations*, Eſay xi. 4. The Prophet *Hoſea* ſhews the ſharpneſs of this Weapon: *I have hewed them by my Prophets, I have ſlain them by the words of my mouth*, Chap. vi. 5. C D

This, And this alone is able to affect, and affright, and perplex the Conſcience. 'Tis the Word of him, that hath power upon the ſoul, that's able to queſtion it, to torture, and torment it. 'Tis the Law of Conſcience; all others Laws have both back, and edge, ſtrength, and ſharpneſs from this Law, to affect our Conſciences: We muſt therefore obey them, becauſe this Law binds us to it.

The force of this will appear, when the Parties ſpoken to, have all outward advantages not to be affrighted: as, E

I. *Nemini cogniti.* Secret ſinners, whom no Eye can diſcover, yet the force of this Word convinces them, and ſtrikes them with horrour. *Quid prodeſt neminem habere conſcium, habenti conſcientiam?* ſaith *Lactantius*. The Conſcience cannot *verba reticere loquenti*; but anſwers like an Eccho, confeſſes preſently, when this Word accuſes it.

II *Nemi-*

A II. *Nemini ſubditi.* They, that are beyond all humane check, or controll. *Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked? and to Princes, Ye are ungodly?* Job xxxiv. 18. Yet, when this Word ſpeaks, *Ahab* is troubled; *David*'s heart ſmites him, and *Joſiah*'s heart melts, *Felix* ſhivers, and trembles at it. As *Chryſoſtom* obſerves of *David*'s Repentance, *In tanta poſitus poteſtate, tot aſtantibus, & officia deferentibus, ubi qui timetur nullus eſt* (there was no Pope then, to controll Kings) *quem omnes timent; incurvatur tamen, & humiliatur.* O, this voice of God, 'tis a glorious voice, it ſhakes the mighty Cedars, rents in pieces the rocks, and grinds them to powder.

B *Secondly*, 'Tis *Verbum convictivum.* St. *Peter* makes choice of that Word of God, that was moſt fit, and proper, to detect, and convict them; and he doth manage it ſo, that they could not avoid the dint, and edge of it. And this he doth by a more cloſe, and particular application of it to their ſinfull condition. This conviction, and thorow-application, 'tis exceeding requiſite to work this compunction. 'Tis not the flouriſhing, or brandiſhing of a ſword in the Air, that will wound, or pierce; but the ſtroke of the Weapon muſt be brought home to the Body, or no wound will be given. This penitential ſorrow, 'tis the Phyſick of the ſoul, and Phyſick cannot work, till it be

C applyed. 'Tis not ſufficient to ſhew a man Phyſick, or to ſet it by him; but the ſick man muſt be made to take it, ere it do him any good. General diſcourſes are like the beams of the Sun diſpers'd in the air, they may warm us a little; but that's all: Conviction is like a Burning-glaſs, that gathers all the beams into one point, or center, and faſtens them upon the Soul, and ſo kindles, and enflames it. Thus *Nathan* recovered *David.* While he kept aloof in a general diſcourſe, and told him a Parable, *David* was never troubled with the ſenſe of his ſin, never ſuſpected it concerned him; but, when he cloſed with him, told him, *Thou art the man*, thou haſt deflowred *Bathſheba*, thou

D haſt wounded *Uriah*: Oh! then his heart ſmote him, he cries out of his ſin, and ſues for mercy. The Woman of *Samaria* could hold talk with Chriſt, and anſwer him ſhrewdly, while Chriſt diſcourſed in general of matters of Religion; but, when he came home to her Conſcience, convinced her of her lewd and naughty life, that ſhe lived in Adultery, then ſhe yields preſently, *O Sir, I perceive you are a Prophet, I ſee God is in you indeed.* I, this is the Preaching, which *Solomon* commends, *Eccleſ.* xii. 11. *The words of the Wiſe are like Goads*, that muſt be run into the fleſh; as Nails driven up to the head, faſtned and riveted into the Soul of a ſinner.

E *Thirdly*, 'Twas *Verbum convictivum de his peccatis.* He charges them in a ſpecial manner with theſe, and theſe ſins, as thoſe, that are likelieſt to perplex their ſoul, and bring them to compunction.

I. Murther, and Blood-ſhed.

II. Mocking, and deriding, and ſlandering the Apoſtles.

III. Oppoſing, rejecting, diſclaiming of Chriſt.

Theſe are *Peccata primæ magnitudinis*, ſins of the firſt magnitude; theſe

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these look ghastly upon the soul, and will haunt it with horrour. These raise up an *Hue and Crie* in the Conscience, and pursue it eagerly. Conviction of such sins will make us resolve of a thorow-repentance, even of other sins also. *A man*, saith *Chrysostom*, *that hath some easie infirmities, goes not to the Physician for every ail: but, if he fall* in morbum sonticum, *some dangerous disease; then he will take Physick for it, and for his other infirmities.* Or, *As in an house*, saith he, *the shattering of a Tile, or two, makes us not fall to a repair: but, if the Main Timber be decayed, then we pull down all, and make all new again.* Or, as elsewhere he speaks, *as a strong stroke upon a loud string of an Instrument will make all the other strings to give a sound too.* In this Case it fares with the Soul, as with a man laid up, and imprisoned upon some great Execution, then he looks for Arrest upon Arrest, calls in all his other Creditours, and compounds with them: so the conviction of some great impiety breeds a confession of other iniquities. The soul, being arrested upon the guilt of these sins, repents of them, and makes his peace with God for all other his transgressions.

This is the method, that *Peter* takes to bring them to compunction; thinks it not sufficient to tell them they are sinners, and they must repent. As, in course of Law, general accusations will ground no Action: If we come to accuse a man, 'tis not sufficient to lay to his charge, that he is a malefactour: but we must charge him with particulars: so, would a sinner arraign his Conscience before God's Tribunal, he must frame an Indictment against himself of his more notorious, and personal Impieties.

Indeed the World takes great exception against this kinde of dealing, and snuffs at it. It made *Ahab* account *Elias* his enemy, and to hate *Micaiah*, not endure to hear him. The *Galathians* think hardly of Saint *Paul*, Gal. iv. 16. *Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?* But *David* counts such his only friends, *Psal.* cxli. 5. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; let them reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oil. Faithfull are the wounds of a Friend*, saith *Solomon*, Prov. xxvii. 6. *Magis amat objurgator Janus, quàm adulator ungens*, saith Saint *Augustine*. The World counts it love to forbear reproof; hatred, and ill will, to tell men their faults. What thinks God of it? Quite contrary, *Levit.* xix. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke him, and not suffer sin upon him. Peccata permittere, non est mansuetudo, sed crudelitas*, saith Saint *Augustine*: 'Tis mercy, and compassion thus to trouble, and perplex them. *Quid tam pium, quàm Medicus ferens ferramentum? non est illa crudelitas, sed charitas.* To cut, aund launce apostemated Sores, 'tis not Cruelty, but Charity. As he, that binds a man in a Phrensie; or he, that pulls, and disquiets a man in a Lethargy; *ambobus molestus est, sed ambos curat*; he troubles them both, but he shews mercy to both. *Ligatur Phreneticus, stimulatur Lethargicus; ambo offenduntur, sed ambo diliguntur.*

However the World thinks of this course, we have here three warrants for it in the Text: 1. 'Tis

A 1. 'Tis *praxis Apoſtolica.* If we trouble, and diſquiet, and perplex your ſouls, we have our Warrant from Saint *Peter*'s Example. *Sic factitavit Petrus, ſic concionatus eſt Paulus*; their Preaching wrought in their Auditours, not itching Ears, but aking Hearts. *Lift up thy voice like a Trumpet*, ſaith God to his Prophet: that's a ſhrill, and a piercing ſound; it ſounds *claſsicum ad pœnitentiam*, a Retreat from Sin, and an Alarm to Repentance. *Let not the ſmiles, and applauſes of thine Audience*, ſaith Saint *Hierom*, but *their ſighs, and groans, be thy praiſe, and commendation.*

2. A ſecond Warrant for this reproving in the Text, 'tis *prima*
B *irruptio ſpiritûs.* St. *Peter* was even now filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſo the firſt vent, that it found, is in this ſharp Reprehenſion. The Spirit was now at the fulleſt in St. *Peter*, and this is the firſt, and moſt kindly manifeſtation; he did not *oſcitare in inanitate*, 'twas not for want of other matter: he did *eructare ex plenitudine*, as St. *Bernard* ſpeaks. He was as a new Bottle, filled with new Wine, and ſee he pours it out into the ſores of theſe Sinners. This is the cleareſt evidence, and demonſtration of the Spirit; as the Prophet *Micah* ſpeaks, *Chapter* iii. 8. *I am full of power by the Spirit, to declare unto* Jacob *his Tranſgreſſions, and to* Iſrael *his Sins.* Are the Apoſtles filled with the
C Spirit? We look to hear of ſome new Revelations, and high Myſteries: no, the more inſpired, the more earneſt calling of men to *repentance.* The Spirit of Conviction, and Compunction, that's St. *Peter*'s Spirit, *John* xvi. 8. *When the Comforter ſhall come, he ſhall reprove the World of Sin.* A ſtrange Office of a Comforter to finde fault, to reprove, and breed ſorrow in men. Yes, yes, this courſe breeds the beſt comfort. Sound Comfort is built upon ſerious Repentance; ſound Repentance upon ſerious Conviction. This *ſorrow for ſin*, 'tis compared by Chriſt, to the ſorrows of a *Woman in Travel*; thoſe *ſorrows* breed *joys*: 'Tis not only joy *after* ſorrows, but joy *out of* ſorrow. *Dolet de peccato, &*
D *gaudet de dolore*; as St. *Auguſtine* expreſſes it.

3. Here is *Exemplum benedictum.* This kinde of dealing is warranted by the great ſucceſs, that God gave unto it. See, it ends in a wonderfull Converſion; *three thouſand* ſouls are wrought upon, and converted. Senſual men cry out of ſuch Preachers. *What? will you drive men to deſpair? hurry them to Hell?* Vain men! 'tis the only way to bring them to Heaven. God hath given a full teſtimony to this *Word* of his *Grace.* Thouſands have been gain'd to God by it. As St. *Auguſtine* reports of ſome *Donatiſts*; that, being brought from their Errours by the ſharpneſs of the *Imperial Laws*, bleſſed God for that ſe-
E verity, that affrighted them into their *wits*, ſcared them into the *Church* again, from whence they had ſtrayed. Here is a *Probatum eſt* upon this bitter Potion beyond all Exceptions. *Peter* hath ſaved *thouſands* with it, and *Paul* his *ten thouſands.* This is to caſt the *Net on the right ſide of the Ship*, as Chriſt directs *Peter*; he ſhall not miſs of a plentiful draught. He that means to fiſh for Souls, let him bait his Hook with this Worm of *Conſcience*, and he will take them preſently.

Sermon I.

That's the first Particular of the Text; the Means, by which this perplexity was wrought. Now follows the A

Second, The *Paroxysm* it self, the Anguish, and Compunction, they were brought into: *They were pricked at their heart.* And of it take a double Consideration:

First, See the *sharpness* of it.

Secondly, Take notice of the *goodness* of it.

First, 'Tis exceeding Sharp; their soul is embittered in them: all Comforts are turned into Gall, and Wormwood. The Scripture sets out this Compunction of spirit in terms of Extremity. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 10. 'tis called *a smiting of the heart*: Prov. xviii. 14. *a wound of the Spirit*: Rom. ii. 9. *tribulation, and anguish of soul*: Psal. li. 17. *a breaking*, and *a contrition*; *A broken, and a contrite heart wilt thou not despise*: not only broken, but even to Contrition. *Aliud frangi, aliud comminui, & conteri*; saith *Aquinas*. A thing may be broken, and soon set together again, and made all whole. Contrition breaks all in pieces; as *Hezekiah* did the Brazen Serpent to dust, and powder; as a *Potter's vessel is broken*, saith *Esay*, *so that there remains not a sherd to take up fire from the hearth, or to take up water out of the pit*: B

"that is, saith *Parisiensis*, the heart must be broken, that it be not fit to "receive *igniculum tentationis*, or *modicum aquæ noxiæ voluptatis*; C "utterly unusefull for any wicked employment.

And 'tis the sense of God's Displeasure causes this breaking by three Apprehensions, as by so many strokes.

I. As most *deserved*, and due to us. We eat the bitter fruit of our works.

II. As most *heavy*, and unsupportable by us. *Who knows the power of his anger? Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?*

III. As, of our selves, *unavoidable* by us. *How shall we flee from the wrath to come?*

A poor Sinner, beset with these Anxieties, tortures himself with these pensive thoughts: D

1. *Quid feci?* What have I done?
2. *Quid incurri?* What Danger have I run into?
3. *Quantum doleo?* How bitter are mine Anguishes?
4. *Quò vadam?* Whither shall I turn my self for ease, and comfort?

Not, that every soul suffers the same measure, and degree, and sharpness of compunction; 'tis laid upon them, as they can endure it. *Numb.* xxxi. 23. 'twas the *Law* of *cleansing*, (the Type of Repentance) *that, which can endure the fire, shall pass through the fire; that, which abides not the fire, shall pass through the water, and it shall be cleansed.* All must feel these pangs of Repentance: yet some have more gentle, and easie fits; others finde, and feel more strong, and violent: as there is no Child-birth without Throes, yet some sharper to undergo, others more tolerable. E

Ye see the Bitterness of it; but,

Secondly,

A *Secondly*, Conſider the Goodneſs of theſe mens Compunction; and it will appear obſervable for our imitation in theſe four reſpects:

I. Their Compunction, 'tis the more obſervable; becauſe it is wrought in them without the help, and concurrence of any outward affliction; only by the dint of St. *Peter*'s Sermon. Look upon the Condition of theſe men; for any outward reſpect, all went well with them, no diſtreſs, or calamity lay heavy upon them. Indeed, when God's Hand is heavy upon us, in any ſharp Viſitation, may be, we will bethink our ſelves of our former courſes, call our ſins to remembrance, and ſorrow for them. Affliction doth more eaſily quicken us to com-
B punction. *Ipſa, ſui acerbitate, provocat ad pœnitentiam*; ſaith *Pariſienſis*. As the Brethren of *Joſeph*, all the time of their proſperity, for many years, never bethought themſelves of their Cruelty to *Joſeph*: but, being in diſtreſs in *Egypt*, like to be impriſoned, and brought into bondage, then their hearts ſmote them: *O, we have ſinned againſt the life of our Brother*, Gen. xlii. 21. So *Manaſſeh*, when he was carried Captive to *Babylon*, in his diſtreſs, being in fetters, he humbled himſelf, *the Irons entred into his ſoul.* When loſs, or ſickneſs preſſes us ſore, we can then bethink our ſelves of our ſins, and 'tis well 'tis ſo with us; but that's moſt kindly ſorrow, that's wrought without ſuch means,
C only by the power, and evidence of the Word of God. As we count thoſe ingenuous natures, that need no ſtripes to reclaim them; ſpeak but an angry word, and ye melt them preſently.

How hard are moſt mens hearts? the reproofs of Scripture are but Paper ſhot, they are not affected with them. God muſt diſcharge ſome heavy judgments upon them, ere they ſtoop unto him. Theſe men yield at the firſt ſummons without ſiege, or battery, and come in preſently. *In auditu auris, at the hearing of the ear, they ſhall obey*; Pſal. xviii. 44. It gives great glory to the power of God's *Word*, that it can ſubdue, and deject us, when it comes alone, without the aſſi-
D ſtance of any outward affliction.

II. Their Compunction, 'tis the more obſervable, becauſe wrought into them by the hearing of one Sermon of Saint *Peter*; no ſooner charged with Sin, but they are convinced preſently, and cry out for ſorrow. Not, like *Naaman*, dipt ſeven times in *Jordan*, ere they can be cleanſed; the firſt ſprinkling of this water of Expiation forthwith recovers them. This ſhould be the efficacy of our ſpiritual cures, as *Chryſoſtom* obſerves; not like weak Plaiſters, renewed often, and ſhifted, ere the Cure be wrought; *ſed, ſicut Pharmacum ſemel impoſitum, ſemper ſanat*, it ſoon hath its full vertue upon the firſt application.
E As Chriſt ſaith of the *Ninevites*; *The men of* Nineve *ſhall riſe up in judgment*, and ſhall *condemn* us; they repented at one preaching of *Jonas*, one reproof of St. *Peter* converts them inſtantly. *Line upon line*, Meſſage upon Meſſage, and our Obſtinacy yields not. What's this, but to *reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt?* Acts vii. 51. *offer deſpite to the Spirit of Grace?* Hebr. x. 29. to make God wait upon the hardneſs of our hearts? Happy *Converts*, whom one Sermon of *Peter* reclaimed!

Sermon I.

Happy *Eunuch*, whom one Conference with Saint *Philip* converted! Happy *Lydia*, whose Heart one Instruction of Saint *Paul* opened! Happy *Josiah*, whom one Lesson of the *Law* softened, and melted! In these the Word of God had a kindly work. A

III. Their Compunction, 'tis the more observable, as being wrought in them only by convincing them of Sin; not by threatning, or denouncing of Judgments. Survey St. *Peter*'s Sermon, and there is no thundering out of Judgments, he flashes not Hell-fire in their faces; but only lays open the greatness of their sin, and they yield presently. Their hearts are like soft Wax, the heat of the hand will supple it, and make it yielding, and pliant, without the heat of the fire. Servility, that's afraid of the Whip; Ingenuity is awed with a frown, shamed out of sin, rather than scared, or affrighted. Not, but that we have Warrant to denounce Judgments; *we have in a readiness to revenge all disobedience*, 2 Cor. x. 6. but yet that sorrow is more kindly, and godly, and best accepted, which the apprehension of *sin*, not the expectation of punishment doth work into us. B

IV. This Compunction is the more observable, because, ye see, 'tis a full yielding to the accusation. St. *Peter* charges them with an horrid sin, and, without more adoe, they plead *Guilty* to all, confess the whole *Indictment*. C

1. *Non recalcitrant.* They are not enraged against the Apostle for this sharp reproof, as those other *Jews* were against St. *Stephen*, upon the same accusation, *Acts* vii. 54. *When they heard this, they were cut at the heart*, (not with *compunction*, but with *indignation*) *and they gnashed on him with their teeth*; and stoned him presently.

2. They take no Exception against the Accuser. "You speak "partially, as men engaged in this business, you were his followers, and "Disciples, you plead your own cause, and may justly be suspected.

3. They make no Defence of the Fact. "Call ye this *murder?* "he had a fair, legal Tryal, Witnesses were produced, and examined, "and so by course of Law he was cast, and condemned. D

4. They Excuse it not. "If he were innocent, yet we did it ig- "norantly, we were mis-led by our Rulers, let them answer for it.

5. They *Demurr* not. "They will consider better of it, there "are those, that can give an account of it; if not, then they will yield, "and be sorry for it. None of all these shifts, but they accept of the Accusation; *Cùm plectuntur, amplectuntur flagellum*; as *Gregory* speaks: they confess themselves guilty, and, with sorrow of heart, acknowledg they *are murtherers of the* LORD *of Glory*.

1. *Tanta vis verbi in ore Petri:* Such power, and such strength was in the Word of God preached by *Peter*. His words are like sharp arrows in the hand of a Gyant, they return not empty. As 'tis said of *Paul*, and *Barnabas*, they so spake the Word, *that multitudes believed*, Acts xiv. 1. E

2. *Tanta vis gratiæ in corde populi:* Such prevalency hath the Grace of God in the hearts of this People. Like a Sovereign Antidote,

A Antidote, that ſerved to drive the poyſon of ſin from the heart, into the outward parts, by an open Confeſſion.

That's the ſecond Particular of the Text, their Anguiſh, and Perplexity: and it briefly affords us a threefold Meditation.

(1.) It lets us ſee the out-fall of Sin; the iſſue, and end of it is *ſorrow*, and *vexation*: it may be ſweet in the mouth; but it will be bitter in thy bowels. Thou, that makeſt a ſport of ſin now, the day will come upon thee, when thine heart muſt bleed for it. Thou takeſt that down for a little pleaſure, and delight of thy palat, which, if it prove not thy bane, thou muſt vomit up again, with the rending
B of thy bowels. Thou wilt finde it *an evil, and a bitter thing to provoke the* LORD, Jer. ii. 19.

(2.) It ſhews the In-let, and firſt entrance of Grace: it begins with ſorrow, and ſharp Compunction. The firſt Phyſick to recover our ſouls, are not Cordials, but Corroſives: not an immediate ſtepping into Heaven by a preſent aſſurance; but mourning, and lamentation, and a bitter bewailing of our former tranſgreſſions. With *Mary Magdalen*, we muſt waſh Chriſt's feet with our tears of ſorrow, before we may anoint his head with the Oyl of gladneſs. When the Grace of God comes to dwell within us, 'tis Fear and Sorrow makes
C the forcible entry; though it be Faith, and Love, that keep the after-poſſeſſion.

(3.) It ſhews us the down-fall of Deſpair. Are theſe Converts, whom God means Mercy to, thus ſharply tortur'd? how bitter are their torments, whom he plunges into perdition? If *David*'s Bones were broken; what was the rack of deſpairing *Saul?* If *Peter* wept bitterly; what an Hell do you think was in *Judas*'s Conſcience? *Quid patientur, quos reprobat; ſi ſic cruciantur, quos amat?* ſaith *Gregory*. If the Sovereign Medicine of Repentance be ſo ſowre, and untoothſom; how bitter, and loathſom is the poyſon of Deſpair!

D We paſs to the

Third Particular, That's the Courſe they take for eaſe, and remedy: they repair to *Peter*, and the Apoſtles, crave their help, and direction: *Men, and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* And this Courſe of theirs is qualified with three Conditions.

Firſt, They take a ſpeedy Courſe; as ſoon as the wound is given, and felt, they preſently ſeek for help, and direction. *As in Bodily Diſeaſes*, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, *ſi quid morbi pulſaverit, ſtatim Medicos adhibemus:* ſo theſe do in their *ſpiritual diſtempers*. They put it not off till ſome other time, as *Felix* did, when he felt the firſt ſhiverings, and
E grudgings of Contrition, ὅταν εὐκαιρήσω· when he hath more leiſure, he will adviſe with St. *Paul*. Nor think they, that they ſhall out-grow it in time; that their hearts are like good fleſh, that will heal of it ſelf. No, delays in this kind breed a double Danger:

I. There is Danger *nè evaneſcat dolor*; Blow up the firſt ſparks of Grace, leſt they go out, and die again. Good motions, if not cheriſhed, and proſecuted, will vaniſh away, and then the heart grows harder.

Sermon I.

harder. It is good taking the first advantages of the Grace of God; loſe not theſe holy hints, and bleſſed opportunities. *To day hear his voice*; 'tis *hodie*, 'tis not *quotidie*: thou mayſt never meet with the like opportunity. *Occaſio eſt nutus Dei.* A

II. A ſecond Danger in Delay is, *nè nimis ſæviat dolor.* Hath God prickt thine heart? take the Wound timely, leſt it grow worſe. A Wound is beſt cured, when 'tis freſh, and green; if it rankle, and feſter, the Cure will prove harder. How carefull was St. *Paul*, to apply ſeaſonable comfort to the ſorrowfull *Corinthian*? leſt his ſorrow grow to horrour, his horrour to deſperation. You, that delay, and put off the checks of your Conſciences, when they return upon you like an armed man, then this Truth will upbraid you, as St. *Paul* did the Mariners, *You ſhould have liſtened to me*; that you might have ſaved theſe wofull extremities. That's the firſt Qualification, it was a ſpeedy Courſe. B

Secondly, 'Twas an adviſed, and proper Courſe, they make choice of St. *Peter*, and the reſt of the Apoſtles. And the Wiſdom, ſhall I ſay? or the Happineſs of this choice will appear in four Particulars.

I. They are *ſpirituales Medici*; theſe are ſpiritual men, Phyſicians for the Soul. A wounded ſpirit cannot be cured, but by ſpiritual means. 'Tis not *David*'s Harp will charm, or ſtill this ſpirit of compunction, as ſometimes it did *Saul*'s phrantick ſpirit. *If any be overtaken in a fault, ye, that are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one*, Gal. vi. 1. That Cure is proper to ſuch men only: as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks excellently, *Nihil adeò ſpiritualem virum demonſtrat, ac alieni peccati tractatio.* He is a Phyſician of ſome worth, that can cure the Conſcience: as they are rare Chirurgeons; not, that can cure a wound in the outward parts, but that can heal an inward Ulcer, ſtanch a Vein that's broken, and bleeds inwardly. The World indeed hath ἀνώδυνα φάρμακα, ſome ſtupifying Medicines, as Mirth, and Company, or ſome buſie employment: but ſuch Plaiſters, as theſe, do not cure; but hurt only, and skin over our wounds. C D

II. They repair to the Apoſtles; *Priùs vulnerarunt.* Why; *Peter* was he, that wounded them? beſt of all; none like him to cure, and recover them. What *Hoſea* ſpeaks of God, is true of his Miniſters in a due ſubordination: *They have wounded, and they heal us; they have ſmitten, and they will binde us up.* Sorcerers, they ſay, that are hurtfull, they cannot be helpfull; they are two diſtinct employments in thoſe devilliſh practices: but the Miniſters of Chriſt are enabled with both powers; *binding* and *looſing*, impriſoning and enlarging. St. *Peter* here is like the good *Samaritan*, ready furniſhed with Wine, and Oyl too; both with the wine of ſharp Reprehenſion, and then with the ſuppling Oyl of comfort, and conſolation. Who ſo ſevere againſt the *inceſtuous Corinthian*, as *Paul* was? who ſo compaſſionate to eaſe, and relieve him? E

III. They repair to *Peter*, and the reſt; *Experti ſunt*: they come to men of practice, and experience. Theſe Apoſtles knew what it was

A was to have a wounded ſpirit; theſe had crucified Chriſt; *Peter* had denyed him, the reſt had forſaken him, and it coſt them dear, ere they could be recovered. None like theſe, to direct their conſcience. They do it,

1. *More skilfully.*
2. *More humbly.*
3. *More tenderly.*

1. More skilfully. *Certiùs operatur expertus, quàm Artifex*; ſaith *Ariſtotle* truly. Experience findes out many precious Receipts, that all the meer Book-men in the World are but ſtrangers to.

B 2. More humbly; *Conſider thy ſelf*, ſaith Saint *Paul*; for thou mayſt, nay more than ſo, thou *haſt been tempted*. We our ſelves are ὁμοιοπαθεῖς, *ſubject to the ſame miſcarriage*; which will teach us to handle the ſins of others without inſultation.

3. More tenderly, and with greater compaſſion. They have felt the anguiſh of a broken Spirit, and they cannot but pity it. To what Butchers went *Judas*, when his heart was wounded? he goes to the High-Prieſt, *O, I have ſinned*. What comfort doth he give? *What's that to us? ſee thou to it.*

IV. There's yet a fourth Conſideration, that encouraged their

C repair to *Peter*, and the reſt of the Apoſtles; they are *Unanimes*, all here in a joynt conſent, and concurrence of Judgment; ὁμοθυμαδὸν. *Peter* was *Os Apoſtolorum*; what he had ſaid before, the reſt owned, and avowed, and no doubt will joyn together in the ſame preſcription. They repair here to the whole Colledge of *Spiritual Phyſicians*; they all concurred in the Corraſive, and ſo in the Cordial. This joynt conſent in our ſpiritual Directories, 'tis a great encouragement to the People to entruſt their ſouls with us. When a Sinner is *reproved of all*, and *condemned of all*; he will *fall on his face*, and confeſs *God is in you*, 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

D *Multitudo Medicorum*, diſſenſion among Phyſicians breeds diſtraction in the Patients. 'Twas that the Heathen objected to the Primitive Chriſtians, *We would be Chriſtians, but we know not whom to follow: Quare non conſentitis inter vos? Hoc eſt opprobrium Gentium*, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*: it was a *ſcandal* that hindred the *Gentiles* Converſion, and it ſtill continues. When one man's Preſcriptions are cried down by another, when we come to *Moſes* his Caſe, *Sacrificamus abominationes Egyptiorum*: One man's Religion is another man's Abomination: ſuch diſſenſions in Opinion breed Alienation in Affection, and often encreaſe unto bitter Oppoſition.'

E That's the ſecond, it was an Happy courſe.

Thirdly, It proves Succeſsfull, *Men and Brethren, What ſhall we do?* It diſcovers a threefold effect, that this Compunction hath already wrought in them, to help forward their Converſion.

I. It repreſſes their *cenſoriouſneſs*. Before, they could ſcoff at the Apoſtles, cenſure them for Drunkards, the vileſt imputations good enough to caſt upon theſe *new-fangled Chriſtians*: But now, that their hearts

Sermon I.

hearts are brought to Compunction, they give over cenſuring, fall to beſeeching. A man truly ſenſible of his own ſins, will have little liſt or leiſure to cenſure, and judge, much leſs to reproach and ſlander others. 'Twill make him judge himſelf, and condemn himſelf, and think worſt of himſelf of all other men.. As *Paul* did, "I am *minimus Sanctorum*, and *maximus Peccatorum*. *How can that be?* ſaith *Auguſtine*; Paul *was not ſo, but yet*, ſaith he, *he ſeemed ſo to himſelf*; *and the reaſon is good*; *becauſe that, which ſtands* in debita proximitate, *ever appears*, in juſta magnitudine; *that, which is near to us, and we fix our eyes upon, appears to us in its full magnitude.* Such were his own ſins; he viewed them thorowly; but things more remote, and which we behold not with the ſame heed and attention, loſe much of their proportion; he minded his own ſins, not the ſins of others. A cenſorious ſpirit was never an humble, or penitent ſpirit. A true Penitent knows moſt evil by himſelf, judges his own ſins greateſt, his own eſtate moſt dangerous, and forlorn. *He ſits alone, and keeps ſilence*, ſaith *Jeremy*, *puts his mouth in the duſt*, as a man confounded with his *own Tranſgreſſions.*

Peter, before his fall, thought beſt of himſelf, worſt of other men; *Though all forſake thee, yet I will not.* After his repentance, he durſt not compare, much leſs prefer himſelf before others. *Peter, loveſt thou me, more than theſe? Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* He fell before by a cenſorious Compariſon, now he ſhuns, and avoids it. And yet there is a generation of men, that place all their Religion in cenſuring others. *Omnibus malidicere, officium bonæ conſcientiæ putant*; as *Hierom* ſpeaks. *This is an Hypocrite, this a Reprobate, a third is a Time-ſerver*; and ſo they ſift and winnow other mens lives, as if *Lingua Petiliani* were *Ventilabrum Chriſti*; as if their Tongues were the Fan to purge *Chriſt's floor* with. 'Twas *Auguſtine's* complaint of the Times he lived in, and 'tis too true of ours: *Temerariis judiciis plena ſunt omnia. David* diſcovered this evil in his days, *Pſalm* l. 20. *Thou ſitteſt, and ſpeakeſt againſt thy Brother, thou ſlandereſt thine own Mothers Son*; and he preſcribes the very ſame remedy to cure this humour, that's here in my Text, *I will reprove thee, and ſet thy ſins in order before thee.* That, if any thing, will cure this corruption.

II. This Compunction and perplexity hath a ſecond effect; makes them *reverent*, and reſpectfull to St. *Peter*, and the other Apoſtles. *Men, and Brethren*; words of reſpect, and due acknowledgment. Before, they had a ſlight, and baſe Opinion of them; *Theſe ſimple, illiterate* Galilæans, *Verſe* 7. but now, in their diſtreſs, they are enforced to conceive otherwiſe of them, and to entreat them reverently.

God's Miniſters are never in ſeaſon with the world, till men come to diſtreſs, and perplexity. In the time of eaſe, and jollity, a Miniſter is but a contemptible man; he, and his pains may be well ſpared. Thus to *Jehu's* Captain, God's Prophet is but a *mad fellow*, 2 Kings ix. 11. *Paul* to the *Athenians* ſeems but a *Babler*, Acts xvii. 18. Nay, *Feſtus* counts him frantick, and out of his wits. With moſt men, the

Clergy

A *Clergy* is the only ſuperfluous Profeſſion, and may be beſt ſpared; they either hate them, or ſcorn them. Well; ſtay but till the ſpirit of ſorrow come upon you, and then God's Miniſters will be of ſome account. As men in times of Health care not for the Phyſician, nor all his Preſcriptions; but, when Sickneſs comes, ye will honour the Phyſician, becauſe of neceſſity. In your Proſperity mock God, and his Miniſters; What ſaith the Prophet *Hoſea* of ſuch? *I will return to my place, in their affliction they will ſeek me early*; then we ſhall hear of them. Thus the *Jews*, in proſperity, mocked, and perſecuted the Prophets of God; but, in their diſtreſs, they wiſhed them alive again, B bewailed the loſs of them; *We have no Prophets amongſt us*; Pſalm lxxiv. 9. *The Comforter, that ſhould comfort my ſoul, is far from me*; ſaid they in their Captivity, *Lament.* i. 16.

Well, he that deſpiſes, deſpiſes not Man, but God. While ye ſlight God, and your Souls, ye may ſlight God's Miniſters. But when ſorrows ſurprize you, and your hearts are wounded, then one leaf from the Tree of Life, to ſtanch the bleeding, will be precious to you. This is the honour of our Miniſtery, to be able to help in ſuch helpleſs times. Then, your Conſciences ſhall give teſtimony to us, and ſay, *O, theſe are the Servants of the moſt high God; theſe can ſhew us the way to* C *ſalvation.*

III. The third effect of this Compunction is, it makes them *Inquiſitive. What ſhall we doe?* Surely, 'tis the voice of *anguiſh*, and *perplexity*. And the ſtrength, and purpoſe of this Speech will appear in theſe three expreſſions.

1. *What ſhall we do?* 'Tis *vox Ignorantiæ*. They ſpeak as men at a loſs; they know not how to ſhift, which way to turn themſelves; but they were men acquainted with the Law; nay, devout Zelots of the *Jewiſh Traditions*, Verſe 5. and yet we ſee they are now to ſeek how to eaſe themſelves in that great perplexity.

D Whence ariſes this ſudden amazement?

1. Was it from the *ſurcharge* of *ſorrow*, that had overwhelmed their ſpirits, and darkened that light, which was formerly in them? It often proves ſo. *Sic ſe habent mortalia corda, quæ ſcimus, cùm neceſſe non eſt, neceſſitate neſcimus*; ſaith *Bernard*. They cannot make uſe of what they formerly knew. In ſuch Caſes as this, the Soul refuſes its own Comforts.

2. Or, is it not ἀσθένεια νόμου; It ſhadows out the *inſufficiency* of the *Law*, to breed peace and comfort to us. It may perplex us; but it cannot quiet us: diſcover our Sins, but not remove them. *The* E *Law*, ſaith Saint *James*, *is a Looking-glaſs*, that can *ſhew* our ſpots, but not *cleanſe* them. The Laver under the Law was made of Looking glaſſes. *Speculum Legis* muſt be turned *in Lavacrum Evangelii*. What the Law diſcovers, the Goſpel pardons.

3. Or, was it not *Vanitas ritualis Religionis?* They placed all their Religion in ſome outward Obſervations, without the life and piety of inward Devotion. Rituals with Subſtantials are the

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beauty of Religion; but ſevered, and divided, will breed but cold comfort to us. A

2. *What ſhall we do?* 'Tis *vox docilitatis*; that's a *ſecond fruit* of their Compunction; it makes them Docible, and Tractable, willing, and deſirous to receive inſtruction. A contrite, penitent ſpirit, is ever a teachable ſpirit. Compunction bores, and opens the ear, makes it capable of direction. *Fear makes conſultive*, ſaith *Ariſtotle, and inquiſitive, deſirous of counſel, and better information*. While our hearts are at eaſe, and our ſins dare us not, *Solomon* tells us, *We ſcorn the counſel of Wiſdom, we will none of her inſtructions*: but, in the day of anguiſh, we will wait at *VViſdom*'s doors, cry out with *Saul*, *LORD, what wilt thou have me to do? David*'s Petition, will be then in ſeaſon; *Trouble, and ſorrow hath laid hold upon me, O teach me thy Statutes.* B

3. *VVhat ſhall we do?* 'Tis *Vox promptitudinis*; that's a *third* effect of Compunction; it begets a readineſs to undertake any courſe, that ſhall be preſcribed for relief, and comfort.

In our eaſe, heaven muſt fall into our laps, or we will none of it. If it put us to pains, or coſt, 'tis too dear a bargain for us to deal withall. Like *Naaman* the *Syrian*, we ſnuff at any troubleſom condition, and fling off preſently. What needs this going to *Jordan?* What needs theſe Prayers, and Faſtings, and Reading, and curbing of our Luſts? But, when our ſouls are in perplexity, we will be glad to accept of Mercy upon any Terms; we will take heaven at God's price then. *He, that means to go to heaven, and ſalvation*, ſaith *Chryſoſtom, will never ſtick at difficulties, nor queſtion, Quid aſperum in via? quid laborioſum?* No; Prayers, and Tears, and Alms, and Faſtings, and all poſſible endeavours. "I will do any thing, Lord, "I will ſuffer any thing to get Hell out of my Soul now, and to keep "my Soul out of Hell hereafter. C

O, conſider this, ye that forget God, now, leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you. D

FIVE E

FIVE
SERMONS
PREACHED
ON
EASTER-Day.

FIVE

SERMONS

PREACHED

ON

EASTER-DAY.

ON EASTER-DAY,

The First Sermon.

1 Cor. xv. 58.

Therefore my beloved Brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as you know, that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord.

IS *Chryſoſtom*'s complaint, and 'tis too true, that in the ſpiritual building of the Church of Chriſt, it often times fares otherwiſe, then in outward, and material buildings. Uſually as the Workman leaves his work, ſo he findes it, when he returns to it: but, in the ſpiritual building of the Church, let it be put into a good forwardneſs; yet Satan, and his Inſtruments will be buſie to ſet back, and pull down this holy work, and labour to deſtroy what before was builded.

That great Maſter-Builder, St. *Paul*, found this ill ſucceſs in the Church of *Corinth:* in his abſence, the Devil had not only defaced the beauty of this building by many diſorders and indecencies in the publick worſhip; nor only disjoynted ſome parts of this Building, by raiſing up ſchiſms, and diſſentions amongſt them: but he laboured to undermine the very foundation, and to bring all to ruin, by corrupting, and falſifying thoſe grand Articles of our Faith, upon which the Church of Chriſt is eſtabliſhed: in particular, the Article of our *Reſurrection from the dead*: it lies low in the very foundation; they, that deſtroy that Truth, overthrow the Faith, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 Tim. ii. 18. *Fiducia* Chriſtianorum, *reſurrectio mortuorum*, ſaith *Tertullian*. That aſſurance, that Chriſt is riſen, and that we ſhall riſe again, 'tis the pillar, and ground of our Chriſtian confidence. And this great Myſtery began to be queſtioned in the Church of *Corinth*; and therefore St. *Paul* lays on more coſt for the ſetling of this Truth. Foundations require ſtrength, and ſolidity. St. *Paul* diſputes not now *de velando capite*, or *de*

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de decoro in Eccleſia: he is not ordering of ſome decent Rituals in the ſervice of God: but now he reaſons *de rei ſumma*, labours to preſerve this moſt vital, and fundamental Truth; as, in a Building, a loſt Tile, or Battlement is not ſo carefully looked to, as is the preſerving of the main foundation. A

Now the Apoſtle having cleared, and proved this grand Truth of our Reſurrection, he labours in this Verſe, and cloſure of the Chapter, to bring it forth to practice; that they ſhould believe it ſtedfaſtly, and live accordingly. He ſtrives not only to lodge it in their heads, and there leave it; but he labour to work it into their hearts, and to make it bear ſway in their lives, that they ſhould both imbrace the Myſtery, and practice the Piety of this holy Truth, and live as men, that ſhall riſe from the dead. And this he doth by this warm, quick, and affectionate Exhortation, which I have read unto you; *Therefore my beloved*, &c. B

And this Exhortation

Firſt, It hath an Introduction, and Preface to bring it in.

Secondly, Then follows the Exhortation it ſelf.

Firſt, The Introduction is briefly in theſe words, *Therefore, my beloved Brethren.*

And this Introduction puts a double edg upon the Exhortation to make it ſink the deeper, and be more prevalent. C

Firſt, The firſt edg is in this word of illation, or conviction; *Therefore.*

Secondly, The ſecond edg is in this winning word of perſwaſion; *My beloved Brethren.*

Firſt, he uſes this word of illation, or conviction; *Therefore.* 'Tis a convincing Practice, and looks back, and takes in the ſtrength of all his former diſcourſe; and, as a Burning-glaſs, it gathers, and unites all the rays, and beams of Light, diffuſed, and ſcattered in the whole Chapter, and faſtens them upon their hearts, to warm, and enflame them. As if he ſhould ſay, and recollect his former Proofs of the Reſurrection, D

I. Doth Nature it ſelf ſhew the poſſibility of it?

II. Doth the Reſurrection of Chriſt prove the neceſſity of it?

III. Have ſo many Witneſſes depoſed for the Truth of it?

IV. Do we venter our lives in the preaching of it, and for the hope of it?

V. Is there ſuch a crop, and harveſt of glory to be reaped in the Fruits of it?

Conſider, and ponder all theſe Arguments, and be not faithleſs, but faithful, and rejoyce in the comfort of it. *Credendum eſt Deo vel ſemel loquenti*, One word from God challenges our belief; much more, when he vouchſafes to argue, and prove, and diſpute with our Faith, we muſt yield preſently. The Apoſtle in this Chapter hath confuted all errours about it, anſwered, and aſſoyl'd all objections againſt it; theſe oppoſitions removed ſhould make it more evident. As miſts, and fogs, when the Sun hath diſpelled them, make the clearer, and the hotter day: ſo Errours, ſoundly confuted, make the Sun-ſhine of E

Truth

A Truth to be more reſplendent. That's his firſt edg of the Exhortation, in this word of illation, *Therefore.*

Secondly, Here is another edg, and inforcement of this Exhortation, in this word of perſwaſion, *My beloved Brethren.* There is much force in this compellation, 'tis a word of affection, and of much wiſe, and holy, and Chriſtian moderation. The men St. *Paul* writes to, were fallen into a great, and dangerous errour, they queſtioned the truth of our Chriſtian Reſurrection: Yet ſee, with what meekneſs, and moderation he applyes himſelf to them. He accounts them not enemies but eſteems them as Brethren: he calls them not Hereticks, denounces no curſes, B cuts them not off from the Communion of the Church; but labours to reclaim them in the Spirit of love, and Chriſtian affection.

'Tis one thing to doubt of a Truth, another thing to deny it; 'tis one thing to be a Seducer, another thing to be miſ-led, and ſeduced by others. *He, that ſhall break one of Gods Commandements, and teach men ſo,* hath an heavier doom belonging to him, then poor miſ-led, and ſeduced Chriſtians. *Hymenæus*, and *Alexander*, blaſphemous Hereticks, St. *Paul* delivers them unto *Satan*, (2 *Tim.* i. 10.) but in meekneſs he inſtructs others, *If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 25. A good Shepherd deals C otherwiſe with a deſtroying Wolf, then he doth with a ſtray Sheep: he hath his Maſtiff to worry the Wolf; but for the ſtray Sheep, he ſeeks for that, and brings it home on his ſhoulders to the Fold again.

Of falſe Apoſtles, and Seducers, St *Paul* ſpeaks ſeverely; *I would they were even cut off that trouble you*, Gal. v. 12. but for the miſ-led *Galatians*, how gently doth he deal with them? *My little Children*, ſaith he, *of whom I travel in birth again, till Chriſt be formed in you*, Gal. iv. 19. Had the ſpirit of moderation ſwayed in the Church of *Rome*, there had not been ſuch woful rents, and diviſions in the Chriſtian world: That proud Synagogue not enduring to have her own errours touched, D nor yet vouchſafing to touch the errours of others with a gent'er hand. Every Truth with them, 'tis fundamental; every doubt with them, 'tis damnable. *Dubius in fide, eſt infidelis.* I know there is a Truth in that Saying; but not as they meant it, that were the firſt Authors of it. If any man ſcruple, or doubt of any thing, that their Church teacheth, he muſt be preſumed an Heretick, and accordingly puniſhed. This is not καταρτίζειν, as St. *Paul* adviſes, *Gal.* vi. 1. *gently to ſet in joynt again an Erroneous Chriſtian.* No, the Pope is a better Butcher, then a Bone-ſetter; little regarding St. *Paul*'s direction, *Heb.* xii. 13. *Let not that, which is lame, be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.*

E We have done with the Introduction; Come we now,

Secondly, To the Exhortation it ſelf; and that aims at the ſtrengthning, and eſtabliſhing of them in their holy Faith. And the Exhortation branches it ſelf into three Particulars:

Firſt, Here is an Exhortation *ad radicationem Fidei*; he perſwades them to the firm ſetling of the root of Faith: that in, theſe words, *Be ſtedfaſt, and immoveable.*

Secondly,

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Secondly, Here is an Exhortation *ad fructificationem Fidei*; when their Faith is ſtrongly rooted downward, then he exhorts them, that it may bring forth fruit upward: that's in theſe words, *Always abounding in the work of the Lord.* And then, that this may be done,

Thirdly, Here is an Exhortation *ad irrigationem Fidei*; to the watering, and cheriſhing of this root of Faith, that it may be fruitful: that's by aſſuring them of a plentiful reward, that ſhall be returned to them, *Knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Thus the Apoſtle exhorts the *Corinthians* to thoſe ſpiritual Duties, which he highly commends in the *Theſſalonians*, 1 *Theſſ.* Chap. iii. the Work of Faith, and labour of Love, and patience of Hope.

I. *Be ſtedfaſt, and immoveable*; that's the work of Faith.

II. *Abounding alwayes in the work of the Lord*; there is the labour of Love.

III. *Knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*; there is the patience of Hope.

Come we to the

Firſt of theſe, that's *Radicatio fidei*, the firm, and ſtrong ſetling of the root of Faith, *Be ſtedfaſt, and immoveable.* Two ponderous words and very emphatical. And we may conceive them, either to ſignifie one and the ſame thing, the ſecond ſerving to enforce the former, as the ſecond blow to faſten, and rivet-in the Exhortation. Thus St. *Paul* ſpeaks, Epheſ. iii. 17. *rooted, and grounded in love*: and ſo likewiſe St. *Peter* prays, Chap. v. 10. *The God of all grace make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you.* Such ingeminations will make ſtrong impreſſions in the hearts of the People. Or, rather, we may conceive theſe two words, *ſtedfaſt*, and *immoveable*, to have their proper and peculiar purpoſe, and intendment, and to ſignifie two kindes of Graces requiſite, and needful for the ſtrengthening of our Faith unto all perſeverance.

I. The firſt word is *Stabilitas*, ſtedfaſtneſs, and ſtability. Ἑδραῖος ſignifies to be firmly and ſetled upon its baſis, and foundation: and ſo it imports that firmneſs, and ſtedfaſtneſs of Faith, and full aſſurance, that is contrary to our natural inconſtancy, and levity, and ficklenes of perſwaſion; that ſame ἀστασία, that St. *James* ſpeaks of, the wavering of our thoughts in matters of Religion, and our irreſolution.

II. The other word is Ἀμετακίνητος. That ſignifies another Grace, to be immoveable; and that imports ſtrength, and firmneſs of Faith againſt all outward aſſaults, that ſhall be made upon it; not to be ſtirred, or removed from our holy Faith by any outward attempt ſhall be uſed to unſettle our belief; not to be Reeds, blowed to and fro with every wind, but to be able to ſtand out all encounters; not to give place to any oppoſitions.

So that theſe two, they recommend to us a twofold ſtrength in our Chriſtian Profeſſion:

1. A ſtrength or Conſiſtence in our holy perſwaſion.
2. A ſtrength of Reſiſtance againſt any ſeduction.

The former requires a Chriſtian to be ἑδραῖος, *firmly ſetled*; the other

A other requires a Christian to be ἀνθιστάμενον, *strongly entrenched*, against hostile impressions to be made upon him. The first exhorts us to keep our station firmly, for *by Faith we stand*, as St. *Paul* speaks: the second exhorts to repel invasion stoutly, and to *fight the good fight of Faith*.

Come we to the

I. First of these, *Be stedfast*. And then the Observation is briefly thus much: That *Fulness of assurance, firmness of perswasion is a necessary requisite in a true Believer*. The Scripture calls often and earnestly upon us for this strength of Faith. Our Saviour commands it: *Be not faithless, but believing*, John xx. 27. He said it to Saint
B *Thomas*, that questioned the truth of Christ's Resurrection. So (*Mark*. xvi. 14.) he upbraided them with their unbelief: *Because they believed not them which had seen him, after he was risen*. How often doth he check and chide his Disciples, for their staggering in unbelief, *O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt?* And, as our Saviour commands it, so the Apostle exhorts to it, *Heb*. x. 23. *Let us hold fast the Profession of our faith without wavering*. And so again, *Col*. i. 23. we must *continue in the faith, grounded and setled, not moved away from the hope of the Gospel*. This the Apostle craves of them, *Heb*. vi. 11. *We desire you, that every one of you shew the same diligence, to the full assurance*
C *of hope unto the end*. And for this he prayes to God, that they may attain *to all riches of the full assurance of hope* unto the end, *Col*. ii. 2. *For this cause*, saith he, *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit, in the inner man*, Ephes. iii. 14, 16.

And this strength of faith, 'tis requisite in all the actions and functions of Faith. There are three acts of Faith, that shew themselves in three Faculties of the Soul: and all of these require strength and firmness.

1. The first act of Faith is in the intellectual Faculty, our Un-
D derstanding. There our faith must have firmness of Assent; not questioning and doubting, *How can these things be?* No, if God saith it, a true faith must presently assent to it. As *Job* answered God; *I know thou canst do all things:* Faith believes not only the probabilities of Nature: but that impossibilities of Nature are easie to God. *Faith is* an ὑπόστασις not an ὑπόθεσις a strong subsistence, not a weak supposal, not as *Suidas* defines it, προσβολὴ τῆς διανοίας, a vehement surmise of what we believe. It puts not off God with *Ifs*, and *Ands*, and such kinde of surmises; but saith, with St. *Paul*, *I know whom I have believed, and*
E *he is able to do it*. That's the first, the firmness of Assent.

2. The second act of Faith is seated in the Heart, and there this act of Faith must have a firmness of Reliance; reposing it self strongly upon the Promises of God, *trusting perfectly to that Grace which is brought unto us*. Such was the faith that *Philip* required of the Eunuch, when he sued to be Baptized, Acts viii. 37. *If thou believest with all thine heart*. This Assurance of faith, 'tis compared, in Scripture, to *building upon a Rock*. And a Rock implies τὸ στερρὸν,

Sermon. I. ἡ τὸ ἀχείρωτον, as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks, 'tis ſolid and inexpugnable. But then, to the making of a ſtrong and ſtable building, 'tis not ſufficient, that the rock be ſtrong; but that the building be ſtrongly wrought into it. Otherwiſe be the foundation never ſo rocky and firm, yet, if we ſet up the building lightly and looſely on it, and not work it firmly into the foundation it may be ſhaken and ruin'd. This the Scripture calls the adherence of faith: *My ſoul cleaves unto God.* 'Tis called *the embracing of the Promiſes*, Heb. xi. 23. 'Tis not *contactus*, but *amplexus fidei*; not a light touch, but a ſtrong embracing. A

3. There is yet a third act of Faith, which is exerciſed in the conſcience: and that's an act of perſonal Perſwaſion of our own ſtate, and condition. And this act of faith muſt have firmneſs of Confidence. When the ſoul of a Believer is able to ſay upon good ground, *My ſins are pardoned, my peace with God is obtained, my ſalvation is purchaſed by Jeſus Chriſt.* This is not ſo much the act, as the effect of a juſtifying faith; a comfortable concluſion drawn from the former reliance upon the Promiſe of God; when thy conſcience doth teſtifie, *I believe ſtedfaſtly, therefore I truſt I ſhall be ſaved certainly.* *Paul* calls this a *rejoycing in the hope of the glory of God*, Rom. v. 2. This ſtedfaſtneſs of our Aſſurance will make us ſay, with the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine. Dicat Anima, ſecura dicat,* Deus meus es tu, *ei, qui dicit Animæ tuæ,* Salus tua ſum ego. By this faith, thy ſoul will ſay to God in an humble confidence, *Thou art my God*; and he will ſay to thy ſoul in a gracious aſſurance, *I am thy ſalvation.* This is not preſumption, but a well-grounded confidence, without which, the ſoul of a Chriſtian will ſtill be diſtracted with fears and perplexities. As *Auguſtine* confeſſes of himſelf, *Timebam præcipitium, & ſuſpendio necabar:* he feared to fall into preſumption, and his faith was ſtifled and ſtrangled with doubtings. That's the firſt Qualification of our faith, Stedfaſtneſs; that is, B C

1. Firmneſs of Aſſent to every Divine Truth.
2. Firmneſs of Reliance upon all God's Promiſes.
3. Firmneſs of Confidence of our Perſonal Intereſt, and that they are all made good to us. D

II. Come we to the ſecond Qualification of our faith, to which the Apoſtle exhorts; that's *immobilitas:* our faith muſt be immoveable, able to withſtand, and repel all contrary aſſaults, that ſhall be made againſt it. I told you theſe were two diſtinct abilities, to be *ſtedfaſt*, and to be *immoveable*; the former provides againſt inward wickedneſs, the latter provides againſt outward force; the former dehorts us from a voluntary backſliding, that *there be not in us an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God*, Heb. iii. 12. the latter warns us againſt outward ſeducements, that we be not ἀνεμοφόρητοι, *carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines*, Heb. xiii. 9. or as St *Paul* elegantly expreſſes it, *Epheſ.* iv. 14. *toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrin, by the ſleight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* St. *Peter* felt this aſſault, when E

he

A he walk'd upon the Waters. His faith ſerved him to walk upon the Sea in a Calm, he had ſtrength of Faith to enable him for that: but he beganto ſink in a ſtorm, when the Billows beat on him. And *Bernard* obſerves it in him, he could not endure, that Chriſt ſhould die; but he overcame that weakneſs, and was confident he could die with him: but yet, when danger approached, his Faith wanted this immobility. He was not *ignarus Myſterii*, but *pavidus Martyrii*: perſwaded of the Truth, but not able to endure the oppoſitions againſt it.

Well, this immobility of Faith is no more then neceſſary. Oppoſitions will come, and we muſt provide againſt them. We muſt ſtrengB then our ſelves againſt the *contradictions of ſinners, leſt we be wearied, and faint in our minds*, Heb. xii. 3. A Chriſtian muſt provide not only for the edification of Faith; but for the fortification of it. Building indeed is *altæ pacis opus*, more ſeaſonable for times of Peace: but entrenchments, and fortifications, they are proviſions againſt war, and hoſtility, and a Chriſtian muſt look for it. Faith, 'tis not only an houſe to ſhelter us, but a fortreſs to ſecure us; and God's grace is not only ornament, but armour. The Apoſtle tells of the *ſhield of faith*, of the *ſword of the Spirit*. Chriſtians muſt build, as they did, that repaired *Jeruſalem* in *Nehemiah*'s Time; they had the trowel in one hand to ſtrengC then the building, and a weapon in the other hand to repel the enemy. Chriſt counts it wiſdom ſo to build, that we may endure, and ſtand out a Tempeſt. The wind will blow, the floods will beat upon our houſe: Paper-buildings will not abide ſuch ſtorms and tempeſts, *Matth.* vii.

And for this ſhaking and ſubverting our Faith, Satan hath his ſeveral ſorts of Winds.

1. He hath his winnowing Winds of Temptation.

2. He hath his tempeſtuous Winds of Terrour, and Perſecution. We may reduce all his onſets upon our Faith to theſe three Heads;

1. He will play the Sophiſter, and endeavour *ſeducere fallaciis*,D to beguil us with ſubtilties, and fallacies, and errours in Faith.

2. He will play the Cheater, and endeavour *abducere blanditiis*, to allure us with flatteries, and ſmooth inſinuations.

3. He will play the Tyrant, and labour *frangere injuriis*, to force us out of our holy Faith, by terrours and perſecutions.

1. The Devil hath his ſubtilties and fallacies, and falſe Doctrines to deceive us, *ſpirits of errour* to corrupt the integrity of our Faith. He will tell us of new Lights, Doctrines concealed from the Primitive Chriſtians, reſerved for theſe laſt times, St. *Paul* warns the *Corinthians* of this practice of Satan. *I fear leſt by any means, as the Serpent* E *beguiled* Eve *through ſubtility, ſo your mindes ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. xi. 3. There are τὰ βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ, *Rev.* ii. 34. depths and whirl-pools of errours, into which he will plunge thee.

That thou mayeſt be immoveable againſt this aſſault, labour to be well grounded in the preſent Truth. Get thy wits exerciſed to be able to diſcern 'twixt Truth and Errour. Ye muſt not be *children in*

Sermon. I.

understanding, ever learning, never coming to the knowledg of the truth. What saith *David? Be not like to Horse, and Mule, that have no understanding.* The Horse he is ready for every Rider; the Mule, that's ready for every burthen. But Christians should know what to believe, and from whom to receive it. Learn of St. *Paul* how to try, and reject these false teachers, 2 Cor.xi.4. *If he that comes, preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached,* that can shew you a more perfect Saviour, then our Church hath taught you; or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, gain more sanctifying, and saving grace by their new ways, then what the Ordinances of God have already offered to you, and (if ye be true Christians) hath wrought into you; or, if they teach you another Gospel, which you have not accepted, a more blessed Doctrine, and way to Heaven, then you have been taught, ye might well bear with them: but this they cannot do, therefore listen not to them.

2. A second fetch to subvert our Faith by, is *abducere blanditiis.* Satan, and his Agents have their allurements to entice, and with-draw us. The examples of Great Ones, that's a strong allurement. Thus the Priests, and Elders diſſwaded their followers from listning to Christ: *Do any of the Rulers believe in Him?* Joh.vii.48. Or the throng of the multitude. Oh, 'tis best going that way, which the most walk in; else thou shalt be pointed at, and counted singular: what wilt thou swim against the tide, strive against the stream? Or the hope of Gain; that was *Demetrius* his advice, Sirs, you know, that this Religion brings in our gain to us, *Act.* xix. 25. Pleasures, Profits, Preferments are Satan's usual baits and allurements. The prevailing part of the World, when their net is full, they becken to others to joyn with them. *Come say they, cast in thy lot amongst us, we shall find precious treasure,* Prov.i.13, 14. *What? Can the Son of* Jesse *give you lands, and vine-yards, and make you Captains, and Commanders?* But we can. *My son, walk not thou in the way with them.* Learn with *Moses,* to prefer the contempt, and rebuk of Christ, before the treasures of *Egypt.* Consider how great an indignity thou offerest to thy God, and thy faith, to undervalue it at the price of these outward things. What is this, but to prefer Trash before Treasure, and Pebles before Pearls, and precious Stones?

3. If these will not do, Satan hath a third assault, he will *frangere injuriis,* with injuries, oppressions, and persecutions. If allurements do not withdraw us; persecutions, he thinks, shall drive us away from our holy faith. If *Nebuchadnezzar's* Musick will not entice us, his fiery furnace, that shall enforce us to fall down to his Idol. This stagger'd St. *Peter's* Faith; this made *Demas* forsake St. *Paul*; this made the *Galatian* Divines to comply with the *Jews* in their *false Doctrine, lest they should suffer persecution for the Cross of Christ,* Gal.vi.12. But what saith *Paul? I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified unto me.* He was mortified, not only to the allurements, but also to the threats, and terrours of the world. The love of Christ will subdue not only

A only carnal hopes, but worldly fears. A ſound Chriſtian will contemn *quicquid delectat, & quicquid terret.* Neither delights, nor worldly ſpight ſhall prevail with him. His faith will overcome *cuncta invitantia, cuncta minantia, cuncta cruciantia*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. Hopes, and fears, and torments, ſhall not overthrow his faith. Such an one was St. *Paul*, a very crucifix of mortification. Come to a dead man, and entreat him, and offer him preferment, or threaten a dead man with pains, and torments, 'tis all in vain; he is dead to theſe things, they cannot move him. A ſound faith deſpiſes all theſe aſſaults, overcomes the world, *Cum omnibus amoribus, erroribus, terroribus*, as *Auguſtine*
B ſpeaks; fallacies, flatteries, menaces, he is immoveable by any of theſe.

And, that thy faith may be thus immoveable, labour for two things, that will conduce to it.

1. Study for clear apprehenſions.
2. For firm, and ſtrong reſolutions.

Firſt, Get ſound, and judicious apprehenſions of what is to be believed, and then work thine heart to ſtrong, and peremptory reſolutions to cleave to it. Would a man walk ſteddily in his way? He muſt have two helps, light, and ſtrength. A blind man is ſubject to
C ſtumbling; and a weak man is ſubject to falling. So it fares in point of Religion; ignorant men are dim-ſighted, they eaſily ſtumble; and weak, feeble men, deſtitute of ſtrength, they are ſubject to falling: but an underſtanding and knowing Chriſtian, a reſolved and ſtrongly-perſwaded Chriſtian, will ſtand firmly, walk ſteddily, neither fail, nor falter in his holy profeſſion.

And to attain to theſe two, conſider ſeriouſly of a double intereſt.

(1.) God's intereſt in the truth of Religion. Our Faith, and Religion, 'tis his *depoſitum*, 'tis that, with which he hath entruſted thee, committed it to thy keeping. Καλὴν παραθήκην. *That good thing, which is committed to thee, keep by the Holy Ghoſt*, ſaith *Paul*
D to *Timothy*. And τηρεῖν must be ἀσφαλίζεσθαι: he that will keep a precious thing ſafely, muſt guard it ſtrongly. St. *Paul* would be ſure to keep that pledge, though it coſt him blows. *I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith*; he would part ſooner with his life, then his God, and his Religion. That's God's intereſt.

(2.) Then conſider thine own intereſt. The truth of Religion, it nearly concerns thee; 'tis thy portion, 'tis thine inheritance, 'tis that, by which thou holdeſt all thy right, and claim to ſalvation. Will a man lightly part with his inheritance; give up his right to what he poſſeſſes? be wrangled out of his Evidences, by which his
E Tenure holds? What ſaith *David? Thou art my portion, O LORD; I have ſaid, that I will keep thy Word; thy Teſtimonies have I claimed, as my heritage for ever.* Take heed of *Eſau*'s profaneſs, to part with thy birth-right to Heaven upon any terms.

We have done with the firſt Particular, *radicatio fidei*, the ſetling, and ſtrengthning of the root of faith. Now proceed to the

Second, That's the fructification of faith; *Always abounding in the*

Sermon. I. *the work of the Lord.* The root of faith must bring forth the fruit of faith. We must not rest in the goodness, and firmness of the root, believe assuredly, and rest in that: but we must bring forth fruit. Faith, 'Tis a foundation; 'tis not enough to settle a foundation, but we must add a superstruction, and raise up the building. Faith, 'tis a root, and he that plants a root, looks for fruit. 'Tis God's complaint, and controversie with his people, *I planted it with the choicest Vine, and I looked it should bring forth grapes*, and it proved *Hosee*'s Vine, an empty Vine, barren and fruitless. What saith St. *Peter*? *Add to your Faith, godliness, temperance, patience, charity; for if these things abound in you, you shall not be barren, or unfruitful in the knowledg of Christ*, 2 Pet. i. A Christian must not be like a Cypress-tree, goodly boughs, but not any fruit. No; *Esay* tells us what trees we should be; *We must take root downward*, and what then? *spread abroad our boughs upward?* no; that's not all, *we must bear fruit upward*, Esai. xxxvii. 31. The *Pelagians* said of the Heathen men, that they were *steriliter boni*; good men, but yet unfruitful. St. *Augustine* tells them, *Nemo est steriliter bonus*; no good man is an unfruitful man. Faithful and fruitful must go alwayes together.

And here we have three things.

I. The kind and quality of the fruit; 'tis *Opus Domini*, *The work of the Lord.*

II. The measure and quantity of it; that's *plenty* and *abundance.*

III. The time and the season of this fruit, it must be *alwayes.*

I. The kind and quality of the work; 'tis *the work of the Lord.*

And, this

1. *Specifies* the *Work*;

(1.) In general, every holy work, and act of piety, the whole carriage, and ordering of our conversation aright, that's the doing of what commends us to God's acceptation; that's *the work of the Lord.* Whatsoever fulfils his Will, whatsoever advances his Glory, that's a work, which God will own as his work. *Augustine* describes it, *Quicquid fit, ut sanctâ societate inhæremus Deo*; whatsoever gives us communion with God, that's God's Work. But, the Scripture is more particular in specifying this work.

(2.) Therefore embracing of Christ, and fixing our souls upon him, that's *the work of the Lord*, Joh. vi. 29. *This is the work of God*, saith our Saviour, *that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* The habit, and grace of faith, that's the root of faith; but the exercise and employment of faith, that's a fruit of faith, and a *Work of the Lord*; so he esteems it. As 'tis with some plants, both root and fruit are good meat; such a plant is faith in the soul of a Christian.

(3.) That Work unto which God particularly calls us, that's *the Work of the Lord.* God is the great Master of the Household, he sets us our tasks, he gives us our Talents, he points us out our work. *Paul* saith it to servants, but 'tis true of all orders, and ranks of men in their faithful discharge of their personal Callings, *They serve the Lord Christ*, *Col.* iii. 24.

(4.) The

A (4.) The furtherance and promoting, and advancing of the Goſpel by all holy means, that hath a ſpecial Prerogative; that's called *the Work of the Lord.* St. *Paul* graces *Timothy* with this teſtimony *He works the Work of the Lord, as I do*, 1 Cor. xvi. 10. *Epaphroditus* hath this commendation, that *for the Work of the Lord, he was nigh unto death*, Phil. ii. 30. And this, 'tis not the Duty of the Miniſter only: but every good Chriſtian muſt, within the compaſs of his Calling, be a true Labourer in this holy Work. See St. *Paul*'s ſalutation to them at *Rome*; *Tryphena*, and *Tryphoſa*, *laboured much in the Lord.* As the *Hebrew-women* wrought for the furniſhing of the Tabernacle: ſo every Chriſti-
B an muſt, in his rank, and ſtation, labour to promote this Work of the Goſpel.

(5.) The work of charity and compaſſion to the poor, the relieving and refreſhing the bowels of poor Chriſtians; that's in an eminent manner, *the Work of the Lord.* 'Tis a work, that God ſtrictly commands, graciouſly accepts, bountifully rewards. *To do good and to communicate, forget not; for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well-pleaſed*, Heb. xiii. 16. They are ſacrifices, ſpecial acts of ſervice, and honour done to God. Should the *Corinthians* ask St. *Paul*, *What's the work of the Lord*, which he exhorts them to? ſee, St. *Paul* tells them in the very next words
C following, 'tis the relief of the poor Saints; *Concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of* Galatia, *ſo do ye.* Having in this Chapter acquainted them with their reward at the reſurrection, he preſently ſets them to this work. Shall you have ſuch an Harveſt? ſpare for no ſeed then; but ſow plentifully. 'Tis Winter-corn indeed, and 'tis longeſt in the earth; but the encreaſe will be great, no leſs then an hundred-fold. Theſe Alms-deeds to the poor are in a ſpecial manner, rewarded at the reſurrection. Feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, viſiting the ſick, they are the works that ſhall be remembred at the reſurrection, *Mat.* xxv. So Chriſt aſſures
D us; bounty to the poor ſhall be *recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt*, Luk. xiv. 14.

That's the firſt Uſe of this Demonſtration. *The Work of the Lord*, it ſpecifies the work.

2. It guides and directs the work, and gives a right aim to it; it muſt be done *as to the Lord*, in conſcience of his commandment, with an holy intention to ſerve him in it. A work may be materially good, as *giving of Alms*; but withal, it muſt be intentionally good, upon a right aim and purpoſe: or 'tis not *the work of the Lord.* As your Coyn muſt not only be good metal; but it muſt have the right ſtamp, *Cæſar*'s
E Image, or 'tis no currant money. St. *Auguſtine* tells us, a work may be *officio bonum*, good in the Kind; *ſed, ipſo non recto fine, peccatum eſt*, and yet for want of a right aim and end, it will be ſin to thee. And thus we may ſin in doing of what in it ſelf is good:

(1.) If we aim wrong, ſet up a falſe end to our ſelves: relieve the poor, but upon vain-glory, *to be ſeen of men*, and to be magnified for it; that's aiming wrong.

(2.) If

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(2.) If in doing good we aim right, but yet aim ſhort; as to relieve the poor upon inferiour ends, to ſatisfie Law, or out of humane pity, or civil compaſſion; Thou aimeſt right, but too too ſhort. In giving Alms, *Quoties cunque manum extendis, cogita Chriſtum*; *Hier. ad Func.* Have an eye to God in it, that he may be glorified; and then 'tis a work wrought in God, as our Saviour ſpeaks, and he will accept it.

(3.) This Denomination, that it is a *work of the Lord*, dignifies our work, and puts value upon it. A work, in it ſelf, may be mean and contemptible; but this Denomination doth raiſe the worth of it, that it is *the Lord's work*, done as to him, and to do him ſervice. The gift of *a cup of cold water* is, in it ſelf, but a ſorry piece of charity: but given by a good Chriſtian, and to a good Chriſtian, for Chriſt's ſake, and for his Goſpel's ſake, is highly rewarded. It matters not ſo much what we do, as upon what Terms we do it. The Drudgery of a Bondſlave, 'twas a courſe piece of work; but what ſaith St. *Paul* of it? *Do it to the Lord*, and it will amount to the reward of of an heavenly inheritance, *Col.* iii. 24. *David*'s Anſwer to *Michal*, for his playing and dancing before the Ark ſhews us how a mean action may be highly improved; *Feci Deo*, ſaith he, *I have done it to God*; that made it honourable, though otherwiſe contemptible. *Bonus ludus* Davidis, *quo* Michal *offenditur, & Deus delectatur*, ſaith *Bernard*. Let *Michal* deſpiſe it, it was done to God, and he accepts it.

We have ſeen the kind and quality of the Work. Now take notice,

II. Of the meaſure and quantity of it, 'tis called *an Abounding*. And the connexion of theſe two is obſervable; *ſtedfaſtneſs in faith*, and *fruitfulneſs in good works*. Certainty of faith breeds not prophaneneſs, but holineſs. They that are moſt aſſured of God's love, are moſt ſtudious, and laborious in all works of Piety. *Having theſe Promiſes*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *let us perfect holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Indeed, 'tis a ſtrong faith only that can make us laborious. 'Tis not life only, but ſtrength, that fits us for labour.

So then the meaſure and quantity, that we muſt aim at, is *Abundance*. Περισσεύσης, 'tis a word of a *full ſenſe*. Take it in a threefold ſenſe:

1. In a poſitive ſenſe.
2. In a comparative ſenſe.
3. In a diſtributive ſenſe.

1. Take it firſt in the poſitive ſenſe: ſo it ſignifies *to abound, to be plentiful in good works*; not to content our ſelves with any ſtint or ſtay in goodneſs, but to encreaſe more and more. *Herein is my Father glorified*, ſaith Chriſt, *that you bring forth much fruit*, Joh. xv. 8. *abounding in the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are to the glory and praiſe of God*. A Chriſtian is a Tree planted in a rich ſoil, in the Garden of God, and God himſelf doth tend it, and cultivate it; how juſtly may God expect abundance of fruit from it? 'Tis the Saying of the *Roman* Husband-man, *Qui fodit vineam, fructum orat*, he that digs his Vineyard

A yard, desires fruit; *qui stercorat, exorat*, but he that manures it, doth importune for fruit: but *qui cædit, cogit*, he that dresses and prunes it too, enforces fruit. God doth all this to a Christian; how doth it become him to abound in fruit!

2. Περισσεύειν carries with it a comparative sense, 'tis a word of exceeding. Περισσὸς is one that exceeds and excels; so should a Christian be in these works of Piety.

1. He must labour to exceed others in an holy emulation. Thus St. *Paul* provokes the *Corinthians* to be charitable to the poor, by the example of the *Macedonians*. He tells them of the forwardB ness of others, to stir them up to an holy emulation, 2 *Cor.* viii. And then,

2. A Christian must labour to exceed himself in an holy progress and improvement; not standing at a stay. We must not only, with the Church of *Ephesus*, *do our first works*; *but* with the Church of *Thyatira*, *our last works* must be *more then our first*, Rev. ii. 19.

3. Περισσεύειν hath yet a further intent; conceive it in a distributive sense, and so it takes in all sorts of fruits; to be *abundant in every good work*, as St. *Paul* speaks. A Christian must be like the *Tree of*C *life, bearing twelve manner of fruits*. 'Tis not for a Christian to be given to some one virtue only, and to neglect the rest; be a just man, but not merciful; or a temperate man, but not humble: No; a Christian must have a dexterity to all good Works. What saith St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians? As ye abound in faith and knowledg, and utterance, so abound in this grace also*, 2 Cor. viii. 7. The Spirit of God in a Christian is an universal Principle of all kind of graces; as original corruption is of all kinds of sins, *Gal.* v. 10. *The fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance.* You may call them *Gad, A company comes.*

D 3. Here is the time and season for this abundance; that's *Alwayes*. And that takes in the whole life and conversation of a Christian. It requires timely beginning, constant continuance, final perseverance; not to be idle, and begin late; not to be lazy, and go on slowly; not to be wary, and give over. 'Tis a great commendation Christ gives of the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus*, Κεκοπίακας, καὶ οὐκ ἐκλάστασας· *Thou hast laboured, and hast not fainted*, Rev. ii. 3. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening with-hold not thy hand*, saith *Solomon*, Eccles. xi. 6. As they say of the Husbandman's work, *'tis never at an end. My little children*, saith Saint *John*, *'tis the last*E *time*, 1 *John* ii. 18. as if he should say, "Though ye be young, "the world grows old; up, and be doing, lest night overtake you. In this Case, 'tis not with the fruitfulness of a Christian, as 'tis with the fruitfulness of Trees and Plants. Trees have their seasons at certain times of the year, when they bring forth fruit: but a Christian is for all seasons, like the *Tree of Life*, which *brings forth fruit every Month*; Rev. xxii. 2. Christ looked for fruit on the Fig-tree,

Sermon I.

when the time of fruit was not yet, *Mark* xi. 13. Why? did not Christ know the season for fruit? *Christus nesciebat quod Rusticus sciebat? quod noverat arboris, calor non noverat arboris Creator?* saith *Augustine*. Did not Christ know that, which every one knows, when fruit is in season? or did he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes, no doubt he did it, to teach us, that Christians must alwayes be fruitful: the whole time of life is the season for fruitfulness. A

'Twere strange to see a Tree full of fruit in the midst of Winter. I will shew you a Garden of God full of good fruits in an hard Winter. 2 *Cor.* viii. 2. the *Macedonians deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality*. Poverty, that's a Winter-season. Who will seek Alms at a poor man's hand? Yet here we see extreme poverty, an hard Winter; and yet plenty of fruit, rich liberality. So, who would expect, that poor labouring men should distribute to the necessities of others? Is this a season for such fruit? Yes: What saith St. *Paul? Let them labour with their hands, that they may give to them that need*, Ephes. iv. 28. B

Now, that this may be done,

Thirdly, St. *Paul* adds the last Particular in the Text; that *irrigatio fidei*, the watering and cherishing of this root of faith, that it may be fruitful; and that's the blessed hope of a plentiful reward: *Knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* C

And here we have,

I. The Duty to be rewarded; that's *Our Labour*.

II. The Reward and Recompence promised; *'Tis not in vain.*

I. We have here the Duty to be rewarded. We have two words in the Text:

1. Ἔργον, *Work*. Christianity is no idle profession. This promise is not made to εἰδότες, to their knowing; but to their doing and working. He saith not, "You shall not *know in vain*, but you shall not *labour in vain. The servant that knows his Masters will, and doth it not*; his knowledg shall aggravate his sins, multiply his stripes, encrease his torments. His knowledge shall prove not only vanity, but vexation also. *If ye know these things; blessed are you if you do them.* D

2. Κόπος, *Labour*. The Duty is not only *work*, but *labour*. Christianity then is no easie profession; and that not a lighter kind of work, but toylsom labour. 'Tis not πόνος, but κόπος in the Text; that signifies hard and painful labour, to bear the heat and burthen of the day: Not only to put to the hand to some easier works of Christianity; but to stretch out the arm, to bow the back, and put under the shoulder to the work, burthensom, laborious works of Piety. Such, as will serve the Lord with all their strength, such kind of labourers shall not fail of a reward. Such were the *Macedonians* in their charity to the poor; they did it κατὰ δύναμιν nay, more then so, ὑπὲρ δύναμιν, saith St. *Paul*, *They did it to their power, nay, I bear them witness, beyond their power*; 2 Cor. viii. 3. Such an one was *Epaphroditus*, who *regarded not his life for the work of Christ*, Phil. ii. 30. To E

such

A such kind of labourers saith Christ: *Great is your reward in Heaven.*

II. See the *Reward*; *'Tis not in vain.* The speech 'tis a λιτότης: less is said, but more is meant. You shall not lose your labour; nay, that's not all, you shall gain abundantly by it. *He, that sows plentifully, shall reap plentifully; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall be given unto you.*

But yet the Apostle, to good purpose, uses this expression, *'Tis not in vain.* It sets out

1. The Apprehension of a Christian.
2. The Wisdom of a Christian.

B 3. The Satisfaction of a Christian.

1. This Expression, *Your labour is not in vain*, sets out the Apprehension of a Christian, what his thoughts are of his future reward, what he conceives of it. Sure, 'tis beyond the comprehension, or imagination; how great it is, and how glorious we cannot say. Only this we are sure of, we shall one day enjoy it. *Our labour shall not be in vain. Acquiri potest, æstimari non potest*, Aug. We shall attain to it: but we cannot now fully comprehend it. St. *John* rests in this; *It doth not appear what we shall be: but this we know, we shall be like him*, 1 John iii. 2. *When I awake*, saith *David*, *I shall be satisfied with his*

C *likeness*, Psal. xvii. 15. 'Tis enough, that he employs us, we serve a good Master, rest in his words. *Matth.* xx. iv. *Go, work in my Vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you.* Ask not what he will give thee, leave that to him; 'tis enough, he promises, we shall not *labour in vain.* It cannot enter into the heart of man to conceive what our reward shall be. We may wonder at it, with *David*; *O, how great is thy goodness, that thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!* 'Tis laid up; both *reconditum*, kept in store, and *absconditum*, kept in secret. But this we are sure of, we have Christ's word for it, *Matth.* x. 42. *We shall in no wise lose our reward.*

D 2. This Expression, it sets out the Wisdom of a Christian; he *labours not in vain.* 'Tis folly and madness to spend one's strength and labour to no purpose, for *that which will not profit* us, bring us no advantage. But a good Christian shall *eat the fruit of his labour*; *he shall see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied* with it. *Audite, filii Adam, genus laboriosum, & infructuosum*, saith *Augustine*. *Hear it, ye sons of men, who labour so much to so little purpose.* Sore are the labours, restless are the projects of worldly men: but here is their folly, *They labour for the winde, and they reap the whirl-winde.* This made *Solomon* hate all his labours, which he had taken under the Sun, be-

E cause all was vain, and there was no profit in them. And he might have spared his labour in finding this out, he might have learned it of his Father. *David* could have told him, *Man walks in a vain shadow, and disquiets himself in vain.* But [illegible] is the Wisdom of a Christian, he deals in a Trade of certain advantage. He is a Wise Merchant, he trades for precious pearls, *Mat.* xiii. His pains are great; but his gains are answerable. *Gemit in labore; sed gaudet in fructu.*

Sermon. I.

The threshing floor requires the pains and labours of the field. Think well on this point, and ye will say, that a Christian's Wisdom excels the Worldling's folly, as much as light excels darkness; as much as substance and solidity, excels emptiness and vanity. A

3. *Your labour is not in vain*, it sets out the Satisfaction of a Christian, and what he rests in. The day of payment, 'tis a long day; 'tis not till the Resurrection. Here is the Satisfaction a Christian gives to himself; it is not lost labour to be a good Christian, if he may reap the fruit of his labour at the Resurrection. Nay, more then so, all other labour is lost labour, but that which shall be rewarded at the Resurrection. The rewards of this life are unworthy rewards for Piety and Religion. *Æstimant fidem pretio vilissimo, bono temporali*, saith *Augustine*: they debase their Religion, that value it no higher then at the rate of temporal blessings. And as such rewards are unworthy, so they are uncomfortable rewards, such as will soon fail us, and leave us destitute. 'Tis good to receive our reward then, when we may enjoy it, and not before. And then only we can enjoy it, when we can never part with it. Thou wouldst receive thy reward now, and be happy to day; but, thou Fool, this night will marr all the jollity of this day. 'Tis a bitter exprobration to be called Fool by God; especially at the latter end to be called *a Fool*. Surely Heaven was never meant, or made for fools. And such are all they, that would have their heaven here, and have none hereafter. B C

A thrifty Labourer asks but meat and drink for the present; let his wages stay till his work be done: So saith a good Christian; "Lord, "supply me with necessaries here, but reward me hereafter. As *Chrysostom* saith; "They that put out their money to use, are sorry to have it paid in too soon: the longer it is lent, the more profit it brings. Thou that wouldst have thy reward here, What wilt thou do at that great day of payment? when other mens hands shall be full, thine shall be empty. 'Tis a poor requital, that Christ gives to such men; *Verily, I say unto you, You have your reward*. And 'tis a sad Answer, that *Abraham* gives to the Rich man, Luke xvii. 25. *Son, remember, that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things*, and didst rest in them; now they are spent and gone, and thou hast nothing left to ease thy misery. If God deals more sparingly with thee here, be of good comfort. What he keeps from thee, he keeps for thee. If he gives thee not a *Kid to make merry with thy friends*; mark what he saith, *All that I have, is thine*; Heaven and Glory, and Immortality, and let that satisfie thee. D

Contemnit præsentia solatio futurorum, St. *Hierom.* E

ON

ON EASTER-DAY,

The Second Sermon.

HEBREVVS xiii. 20.

Now, the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, *that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant*, &c.

WHich Words carry with them the form and purpose of a Devout Prayer. And Prayer, 'tis the usual closure, and conclusion of St. *Paul*'s Epistles to the Churches, the solemn Testimony of his love, by which he seals up his affection to them. And, if we observe the method, and order of his writings, we shall finde them to move, and turn upon these three Hinges.

First, *Docet*, He teaches, and instructs them in some needfull, saving Truths to be believed. So he doth the *Hebrews* in this Epistle; he settles and grounds them in those high points of Christ's Priesthood, and Mediation, and the fulfilling, and abolishing the Law of Ceremonies, by his Death and Passion.

Secondly, *Hortatur*; having planted the truth of Doctrine in matter of Faith, he waters it with Exhortation to a firm Profession, and holy Practice suitable to that Doctrine, to which they have been delivered. That's a second passage in this Epistle.

Thirdly, *Precatur*; He winds up all, both Doctrine and Exhortation, with a Religious and Fervent Prayer for them. He knows, planting by Instruction, and watering by Exhortation, will be unsuccessfull; except Prayer obtain an encrease from God. Instruction,

Exhor-

Serm. II.

Exhortation, Prayer, are the three main Duties, and Functions of him that will approve himſelf (as Saint *Paul* was) *a faithfull ſervant in the Houſe of God.* A

That's the firſt Obſervable in the Text, *Orat.*

Secondly, *Mutuò orat*; that's a ſecond Obſervable Conſideration in this Prayer of *Paul*, 'tis a mutual Prayer. In the two former *Verſes* he craves their prayers for himſelf, *Brethren pray for us.* Verſe 18. He deſires the aſſiſtance, and benefit of their prayers. The greateſt Apoſtle may ſtand in need of, and finde good in, the prayers of the pooreſt Chriſtians. Saint *Paul* reckons of them, and ſets much by them. And ſee how he requites that fruit of their love. What he requires of B them, he performs for them; he prays for them again. Here is the happy Communion of Saints; here is the ſweet harmony, and agreement of Paſtour and People; here are the mutual engagements of Love and Charity, for the good of each other. Such ſtrong combinations of mutual prayers are forcible and prevailing means to bring down bleſsings. That's the ſecond, *Mutuò orat.*

Thirdly, *Appoſitè orat.* The Prayer he makes, 'tis a moſt proper, and ſeaſonable, and pertinent Prayer. If ye look to the contents of this Prayer, and the ſeveral Ingredients of which 'tis framed, you C ſhall finde it a ſweet recapitulation, and ſumming up of all his diſpute and diſcourſe in this whole Epiſtle.

Firſt, He hath proved Chriſt to be the great High-Prieſt, and chief Paſtour of the Church.

Secondly, He hath proved him to be the great, and only Propitiatory Sacrifice for the pardon of our ſins. It was his blood, not the blood of the *Jewiſh* Sacrifices, that could work that for us.

Thirdly, He hath proved the Covenant of the Goſpel to be the only Covenant of ſalvation. The Covenant that *Moſes* made, was but temporary; this of the *New Teſtament* is eternal.

Fourthly, He hath proved, that the ſprinkling of the Blood of D Chriſt only can purifie, and ſanctifie the Conſcience. All the legal Ceremonies, and Rites of Purification were unſufficient to cleanſe us ſpiritually. Now, ſee how ſweetly he ſums up all theſe Truths in this holy Prayer; *The God of peace, that brought*——

Firſt, This Prayer acknowledges him to be *the great Shepherd of the Sheep*; there is his High-Prieſthood.

Secondly, He *was brought from the dead by the God of peace*; there by his Death, he hath pacified God for us.

Thirdly, He hath wrought this by the vertue of *the Everlaſting Covenant*; there is the Ceremonial Law aboliſhed, and the Goſpel E eſtabliſhed.

Fourthly, By the Blood of the *Covenant*, we muſt be ſanctified, and made fit for every *good work.* That's the efficacy of his Blood, *to purge our Conſciences from dead works, to ſerve the living God.* Thus you ſee, this Prayer is a full, and ſweet comprehenſion of his former Doctrine, and a great confirmation of the piety and holineſs of it. 'Tis a

good

A good Character of Truth, when we can pray that which we preach. *Sicut credimus, ſic & oramus*; as we believe, ſo we pray; and *legem credendi facit lex orandi*; our prayers are real profeſsions, and proteſtations of our Faith. Thus *Auguſtine* argues in matters of grace, and converſion; *God doth it, becauſe the Church prayes him to do it.* He confutes the *Pelagians* by the ſet Forms of Prayers eſtabliſhed in the Church. It were mockery of God, to pray him to do that, which we can do our ſelves without him. 'Twas the wiſdom of the ancient Church, to compoſe not only Sound and Orthodox, but Holy and devout Confeſsions of Faith; as that of *Ambroſe*, and *Auguſtine*, and
B that heavenly Hymn, *Te Deum*. They compriſed the Articles of their Faith into thoſe pious Forms. The Faith of the *Trinity*, of Chriſt's *Divinity* and *God-head*, were framed into their Doxologies, and Forms of Thankſgiving. And 'tis a winning and perſwaſive way to believe theſe Truths, thus to pray them into the hearts of God's People; they compoſed Hymns and Pſalms, to convey theſe Truths with delight into them: They ſummed them up in their *Epiſcopal* Benedictions, and Bleſsings of the People, as Saint *Paul* doth here. He ſets the ſeal of theſe Truths upon their conſciences, in this devout Prayer for them, and Benediction of them.

C The *Text* then you ſee, 'tis Saint *Paul's* charitable, and devout Prayer, his Apoſtolical, and Fatherly Benediction, and Bleſsing of the *Hebrews*.

And in it we may obſerve theſe two Particulars:

Firſt, The Original, from whence he ſeeks this Bleſsing for them.

Secondly, The Bleſsing it ſelf he wiſhes to them.

Firſt, The Original of this Bleſsing is in the former *Verſe*. And in it there are two things conſiderable:

Firſt, The Perſon, and Author from whom he craves it; that's *the God of Peace*.

D *Secondly*, Upon what motive, and inducement he ſeeks to obtain it; that's the conſideration, and interpoſing of Chriſt's Reſurrection; *His being brought from the dead again*. Then follows,

Secondly, The Bleſsing it ſelf he wiſhes to them, in the following *Verſe*: and that's *fruitfulneſs in all good works, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, to the praiſe of God.*

The *Firſt* thing obſervable, is the Perſon, and Author, from whom he ſeeks, and craves this Bleſsing of Grace and holineſs for them; 'tis from *the God of peace*. 'Tis true indeed, God is the only Fountain, and Original of all grace; *The Lord will give grace, and glory*, ſaith *David*,
E Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. The Springs, and Well-head of grace are in Heaven, and from the God of Heaven. Saint *James* tells us, that (*Chap.* i. 5.) *If any man lack wiſdom* (or any other grace) *let him ask it of God.* 'Tis an errour, and a dangerous errour, to think we may obtain it any other wayes. *James* bids us take heed of that errour, that we miſtake not in this Point: *Err not, my dear brethren; Every good gift is from above, and comes from the Father of lights*, Verſe 16, 17. The

receiving

Serm. II.

receiving of *Grace*, Saint *Peter* calls it *a partaking of the Divine Nature*; and none can make us partakers of that, but God himſelf. True, but yet the expreſsion of the Apoſtle is very conſiderable, which he here uſes. He names God with this Addition, *The God of Peace.* A

And then the Enquiry will be; Why doth he inſiſt in that Attribute of God, that *he is the God of Peace*, above all others, when he prayes to him for Grace for his People? Many other Excellencies and Attributes, God hath aſcribed to him in Scripture, and the interpoſing of them in our prayers would ſeem very pertinent, and uſefull, for the obtaining this great bleſsing of Grace and Sanctity.

I. The Scripture terms him *the God of Power*; and the bleſsing he ſues for, 'tis a work of great power, to ſanctifie, and fit ſuch ſinfull creatures as we are, to every good work. 'Tis his *Divine power*, ſaith Saint *Peter*, *that gives us all things, that pertain to life, and godlineſs*, 2 Pet. i. 3. B

II. The Scripture terms him *the God of Grace*; and this work, 'tis a gracious work. This Prayer 'tis a Petition for Grace; and ſo Saint *Peter* frames it accordingly, 1 *Pet.* v. 10. *The God of all grace make you perfect, ſtrengthen, and ſtabliſh you.*

III. The Scripture terms him *the God of Glory*; and this work we are about, the work of Sanctification, 'tis a glorious work. Saint *Peter* calls it *the Spirit of glory*, 1 Peter iv. 14. Yet we ſee the Apoſtle paſſes by theſe Titles, and Attributes, and inſiſts upon this other, improves this to his purpoſe, *The God of Peace*, as moſt proper, no doubt, and pertinent to what he aims at. C

1. In *general*;

(1.) The aim, and drift of the Apoſtle, in this Epiſtle, is to compoſe all jarrs, and differences of Opinion in the *Church* of the *Hebrews*. Many bickerings were amongſt them concerning *Moſes*, the *Law*, *Circumciſion*, and *Sacrifices*. Saint *Paul* inſinuates thus much by this expreſsion; that theſe diſſenſions ill become the ſervants, and worſhippers of *the God of peace: God is not the God of Confuſion, but of Order*; he is not *the God of diſſenſion*, but *the God of peace*. He is called *the God of peace*, and he hath *called us unto peace*, 1 Cor. vii. 15. Our *High-Prieſt* is the *King of Salem*, that is, *the King of peace*, Hebr. vii. 2. He requires us *to follow the Truth in peace*, to *preſerve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, Epheſ. iv. 3. Peace, 'tis the high and honourable Title of our Maſter; the choice Livery, and Cogniſance of us his ſervants. Peace, 'tis both our Badge and our Pledge: our Badge, by which we ſhall be known to be Chriſtians; *Hereby ſhall all men know us to be his Diſciples*: and 'tis our Pledge, by the retaining of which, he will own us hereafter, if we be found of him in peace. D E

(2.) He prayes for Grace from *the God of peace*; becauſe, in truth, all Grace flows from this, that God is become a *God of peace* to us. While he is an angry, offended God with us, there is no hope to receive from him any gift of Grace. As *Jehu* anſwered *Joram*, that

A that enquired for peace; *What peace can there be, while ſuch ſins remain?* ſo may we ſay, *What Grace can be hoped for, while there is no Peace?* His Holy Spirit, 'tis the gift of his Love, the fruit of his Peace, and Reconciliation: *Amor, primum donum, à quo reliqua fluunt*; the Peace and Love of God, is the firſt favour, from whence all other favours flow. Firſt, God becomes the *God of Peace*, and then the *God of Grace* unto us. The *Roman* Story tells us of a bold Senatour of *Rome*, that railed openly upon his Soveraign Lord, *Auguſtus Cæſar*, and next day begging his pardon, and obtaining it of the Emperour, he forthwith craved of him a very great gift; adding,
B he ſhould then be aſſured, that he had really pardoned him, if he would beſtow ſuch a gift upon him; and he had it accordingly. 'Tis ſo, twixt God and us; the gift of Grace, 'tis the great ratification of our peace with him. Thus *Paul* expreſſes it, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 23. *The God of peace ſanctifie you throughout.* St. *James* his ſpeech, 'tis true in this ſenſe alſo: *The fruit of righteouſneſs*, 'tis *ſown in peace.* If God become to us *the God of peace*, then will he become to us *the God of grace.* Sue for Pardon, and Peace firſt, and then his Grace, and Spirit, all, that belongs to life, and godlineſs, ſhall be made good unto thee.

C (3.) This Title, and Denomination of *the God of Peace*, carries with it a third intimation, and that is of a neceſſary qualification, that is requiſite in us for the receiving of this grace, St. *Paul* prays for. He is *the God of Peace*, and beſtows his Grace, where he finds his Peace. Such, as follow peace, the grace of God follows them, and enters into them. If there be a *Son of peace*, the bleſſing of Grace ſhall reſt upon him. A peaceable ſpirit invites the Holy Ghoſt to enter into us, and to abide with us. This heavenly temper fits us for the meet receiving of all other Graces. It makes our hearts *ſubactum ſolum*, a
D fit ſoil for the ſeed of Grace. God will not ſow the precious ſeed of his *grace*, among briars and thorns; ſuch are all thoſe that are enemies to Peace. Wrath and Contention drive away the Spirit of Grace: Peace, and Love doth bring him home to us. We read in 2 *King.* iii. that *Eliſha* being tranſported with anger, and indignation, he called for Muſick, to calm, and compoſe his paſſion, and ſo to fit him for the holy Motions of the Spirit of God. Sure, a peaceable Spirit is to a Chriſtian, as that Muſick to *Eliſha*; it fits, and frames us for thoſe heavenly illapſes of God's Spirit into us. The ordinary coming of the Spirit upon us, 'tis anſwerable to his firſt extraordinary
E coming upon the Apoſtles. How were the Diſciples then diſpoſed? Were they quarrelling, or contending? no; 'tis ſaid, *Acts* ii. 1. *They were all, with one accord, in one place*; ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *all of one minde*: then they received the gifts of Grace. As *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* cxxxiii. 1. Where men *dwell together in unity*, there the Lord *commands this bleſſing* for ever. The *God of Peace* beſtows his Spirit, where he findes Peace. Oh, a *meek, and a quiet ſpirit is, in God's* eyes, *of great price*, much ſet by, 1 *Pet.* iii. 4.

Serm. II.

But, beſides theſe more general Conſiderations,

2. This Title, of *the God of Peace*, hath a more cloſe reference to the Text, to the purpoſe of it, and to all the parts of it:

(1.) It hath a reference to *Sanguis*, to the Blood here mentioned, and to the *great Shepherd's* Death. And it referrs to that, as to the main ground, and foundation, and purchaſe of this peace. Indeed, this was not a primitive, original peace; but a purification, a reſtoring of Peace, when 'twas loſt. We had all of us broken our Peace with God, and he became our Enemy; and that called for blood-ſhed, and death. Blood, and death, betoken wrath, and heavy diſpleaſure. And that was the caſe 'twixt God, and us. His wrath, and juſt indignation called aloud for our *death*; nothing elſe could content him, or give his juſtice full ſatisfaction. Now, becauſe Chriſt became our Surety, and would interpoſe himſelf 'twixt God and us; the ſtroke of God's anger lighted upon him, ſhed out his blood, and laid him for dead. By that precious death, and blood-ſhed, God's wrath was appeaſed, and ſatisfied, and a full recompenſe was made for our offences.

The Chaſtiſement of our peace fell upon him; ſaith *Eſai*, liii. 5. and by it our peace was purchaſed. God's anger ſlew him, cauſed him to die; and his death, it ſlew hatred, aboliſhed enmity, *Epheſ.* ii. 15. and ſo God is become a *God of peace* to us. His *blood ſpake better things for* us, than our ſins could ſpeak againſt us. God ſmelt a ſweet ſavour of reſt in the death of Chriſt; reſolved never to be angry with us more, but to eſtabliſh a perfect peace with us. That's the firſt reference, that this Title of *Peace* hath; it looks to Chriſt's *death*, and *blood-ſhed*, as to the main ground, and foundation of it. Through this blood, he is become a *God of peace*. His blood is the price, and purchaſe of our peace.

(2.) A ſecond Reference of this Title of *the God of Peace*, is to another paſſage in the Text; that's *Reduxit*. It referrs to the bringing of Chriſt back from the dead again, as the proper effect, and fruit of this Peace. God, being now at peace with us, he brings Chriſt back from the dead. When Chriſt was brought under the dominion of death; that was the bitter fruit of God's fierce anger: but the reſtoring, and bringing him back again to Life; that's the ſweet, and bleſſed fruit of his Peace. In his anger, he arreſted Chriſt, our Surety, clapt him in the Priſon of Death, laid, and charg'd all our debts upon him. Now, that Chriſt hath ſatisfied the utmoſt Farthing, now, in his Love, he enlarges him, brings him out of the holds of Death, lifts up his head, ſets his throne above all other thrones. As *Joſeph*, in his juſt diſpleaſure with his brethren, bound *Simeon* as a pledge for his brethren, and impriſoned him; then, being ſatisfied, he brings forth *Simeon*, enlarges him again, and receives them to favour: So, Chriſt having paid our debt, made up the breach, appeaſed the unkindneſs, ſatisfied the injury; now, our Surety is enlarged, our Bond cancelled, and our Peace reſtored. The day of Chriſt's Reſurrection, 'twas the firſt dawning, and ſun-ſhine of this peace. See how Chriſt imparts this peace, as the main attendant of his *Reſurrection*.

At

A At his firſt appearance to his Diſciples, after he roſe again, his firſt ſalutation to them is, *Peace be unto you*, Luke xxiv. 36. He aſſures them, that now God is become their God; *I aſcend to my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and to your God.* That's the ſecond Reference to *Reduxit*, Chriſt's Reſurrection, that's the immediate fruit of this *peace*.

(3.) There's a third reference of this Title of God, *The God of Peace*; and that's to *Paſtor ovium*, the *Shepherd of the ſheep*. It referrs to that, as to a great evidence, and token, that now he is indeed at peace with us. For he hath not only reſtored Chriſt to Life, but reſtored him to his Office too, committed to him the care, and cuſto-
B dy of his flock again. When he ſmote this Shepherd, the poor ſheep were ſcattered. His fierce anger, like a *Wolf of the evening*, all to tare this Shepherd, worried him to death. Now, being at peace with us, he ſets him *in ſtatu quo*, makes him a Shepherd again with a compleat flock. As *Joſeph* interpreted the Butlers Dream to him, *Gen.* xl. 13. *Within three days* Pharaoh *ſhall lift up thy head again, and reſtore thee to thy place:* So this *God of peace*, within three days, raiſed up our dead Shepherd, and reſtored him to his Office. See how our good Shepherd comes back this day with his ſheep on his ſhoulders. As *Jacob* made his thankfull confeſſion to God, *Gen.* xxxii. 10. *In hoc*
C *baculo, with my ſtaff paſſed I over this* Jordan, in fear, and ſorrow; ſee now, I return with flocks and herds: So Chriſt, *in baculo crucis*, with his ſtaff of the Croſs, waded through the ſwelling of *Jordan*, and the torrent of God's wrath; ſee now, he returns in peace, with his flock, his *beautifull flock*, as the Prophet ſpeaks.

Indeed, the very Trade, and employment of a Shepherd is an Emblem of *Peace*. When the King of *Iſrael* was ſlain in the warrs, the people were as *ſheep*, having no Shepherd, (a ſad condition of war!) but *peace*, 'tis a ſeaſon for *ſhepherds*; then their Trade proſpers. God foretells this, as an evidence of Peace: *The flocks ſhall lie down*
D *in peace, in ſure paſtures. I will ſet over them one ſhepherd* (ſpeaking of Chriſt) *and I will make with them a Covenant of peace, and they ſhall dwell ſafely in the wilderneſs, and ſleep in the woods*, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 25. That is a third reference, to *Paſtor ovium*.

(4.) There is yet a fourth reference of this Title, of the *God of Peace*, and that is to *fœdus æternum*, to the Everlaſting Covenant, that the Text ſpeaks of. And ſo it referrs to it, as to the great aſſurance, and confirmation of Peace. He is *the God of peace: Covenants*, you know, are Acts, and Inſtruments and ratifications of Peace; for he hath granted to us, now, a Charter of Peace, and ceſſation from Hoſtility. But a
E peace, to laſt, and continue; *Covenants* are engagements for *peace*, and *amity*. Here is a ſtrong confirmation of *peace*. God is now become a *God of peace* to us; becauſe he is become a God in Covenant with us. Nay; 'tis not only a laſting, but an everlaſting peace. He hath bound himſelf to maintain this Peace by an Everlaſting Covenant; he hath eſtabliſhed a Peace, that ſhall never be broken. Hear what God ſaith of this Covenant, *Eſai.* liv. 9, 10. *This is as the waters of* Noah *to me*;

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me; for as I have ſworn, that I will not be angry with thee,— The mountains, and hills ſhall be removed,— but the Covenant of my peace ſhall not be removed. A

Nay; 'tis not only the peace of a Covenant, though that be ſtrong; but (as one renders the word; as you finde in the Margin of your Books) *the peace of a Teſtament.* We read of the *quarrel of God's Covenant*, Lev. xxvi. 25. that may meet with jarrs: but, when *peace* becomes a Legacy, a firm Deed, and Bequeathment, that's unalterable; we ſhall inherit Peace. Peace, and Safety, 'tis *the heritage of the Lord's ſervants*, Eſai. liv. 17.

And, for our greater aſſurance, he hath erected a publick Office in his Church, where we may view, and exemplifie this Covenant, take out a true, and perfect Copy of his laſt Will and Teſtament; and that's in the Inſtitution of the *Sacrament.* Here we may ſue out our *pardon* for the breaches of this Covenant: here we may renew our *Charter* and confirmation of this Covenant: here we may plead for *mercy* and *grace*, by the Tenour of this Covenant: here we may, *tanquam ex ſyngrapha, cum Deo agere*, in an humble confidence we may urge God with his Covenant, as the Pſalmiſt doth, *Have reſpect unto the Covenant*, Pſal. lxxiv. 20. ſpread before him his own Teſtament, preſent unto him his Son's blood, as the Seal of this Teſtament, and ſue for the benefit of it. B C

We have done with the firſt Particular, the *Perſon*, of whom he craves the Bleſſing; that's *the God of peace.* Now,

Secondly follows the *Motive* that he uſes, and by which he ſtrengthens, and enforces his Prayer; and that's the conſideration of our *Saviour's Reſurrection.* And 'tis the divine Art, and holy Rhetorick of Prayer, not only to preſent our Suits; but to preſs, and enforce them by the interpoſition of ſuch prevailing Arguments. And yet we know what ſtrange conſtructions have been made of thoſe effectual Obteſtations, with which the Zeal of the Church hath wreſtled with God; beſeeching him *by* Chriſt's *Death, and Paſſion, and glorious Reſurrection to be mercifull to us.* Well; Saint *Paul* here practiſed it, and his example will warrant it. D

The Motive, I ſay, which he uſes, it is our *Saviour's Reſurrection.* And of it take a double view. Let us ſee,

I. The Apoſtle's Deſcription of it.

II. His Application, and Improvement of it, for the obtaining of his Prayer.

I. See the Deſcription of it: and that conſiſts of three Particulars. E

1. Here is the Perſon raiſed, that's *our Lord* Jeſus, *the great Shepheard of his ſheep.*

2. Here is the Action of Raiſing; *He brought him again from the dead.*

3. In the Vertue of which all this was done; that's *by the blood of the Everlaſting Covenant.*

1. Here

A 1. Here is the Perſon raiſed. And he made known,

(1.) By his Perſonal Title, *The Lord* Jeſus. And this Title, 'tis very pertinent, and ſuitable to his Reſurrection. For, however this glorious Title was due to him, even from his birth, yet, 'tis obſervable, 'tis never completely, and *in terminis* given to him, till after his Reſurrection. *Lord* he is called, and *Jeſus* he is called before; but, in all the Goſpel, you never meet with theſe, all in one *Appellation*, till his Reſurrection. The firſt place, that names him *The Lord Jeſus*, is *Luke* xxiv. 3. After his riſing again, 'tis ſaid, *They found not the body of the Lord Jeſus.* There it begins; never afore: but then, after,
B frequently. By his Reſurrection he was declared to be the *Son of God*; then made known to be *Lord*, and *Chriſt*. Then this beautifull Wreath was put upon his Head, and publickly proclaimed, *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. But yet the weight, and emphaſis of the Speech lies moſt in this later Name.

(2.) The Title of his Office. The former indeed, is more honourable for him: but this other, *That great Shepheard of the Sheep*, 'tis more comfortable to us, as implying thus much: That, whatſoever betided him in the whole carriage of this Buſineſs, befell him not as
C a *private perſon*, for his own cauſe; but in the behalf of thoſe, that were committed to his charge: Whatſoever he did, or ſuffered, 'twas all for his Sheep.

1. His firſt Miſſion, and coming into the World, was for his Sheep. *I am ſent to the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of* Iſrael, *Matth.* xv. 24.

2. His Death, and Paſſion, 'Twas not in his own behalf; but for his Sheep. *I lay down my life for my ſheep*, John x. 15. We may well invert *David*'s Deprecation, *Turn thy hand upon theſe ſtray ſheep: this Shepheard, what hath he done?*

3. His Reſurrection, that was for his Sheep, to reſume *that Office*,
D to take care over his Flock, *God, having raiſed up his Son* Jeſus, *ſent him to bleſs you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities*; Acts iii. 26. All *for us men*, and *for our ſalvation*. He was born a Shepherd, he died as a Shepherd, roſe again as a Shepherd; all for the good, and benefit of his Flock. For *us* he underwent Death, for *us* he overcame it in his Reſurrection.

For better underſtanding of this Title, let us take it aſunder into theſe three Particulars:

Firſt, Here is his Charge, they are *Sheep*.

Secondly, Here is his Office, that's a *Shepherd*.

E *Thirdly*, Here is the Dignity of his Office, *That great Shepherd.*

Firſt, We ſee the Church, the body of Chriſtians, they are called *ſheep*. And this reſemblance, 'tis exceeding frequent in Scripture. The Church of God, 'tis called *a Flock of ſheep. Fear not, little Flock*, ſaith Chriſt; *Luke* xii. 32. *Feed the Flock of God*, 1 Pet. v. 5. *As the holy Flock, the Flock of* Jeruſalem, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 38. 'Tis fitly ſo termed in theſe Reſemblances:

I. Sheep

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I. Sheep are *Animalia gregalia*; ſuch kinde of Creatures, as naturally gather themſelves together, unite into a flock. Other creatures, we know, many of them live ſingle, and apart. And, though they ſometimes ſort together, yet they oft ſever, and keep aſunder: But Sheep are never right, but when they come together, and live in a flock. Such are Chriſtians; ſuch is the Church, combined in an holy Society, and Communion. 'Tis unnatural for a Sheep to go from the flock. Such are called *ſcattered ſheep*, Jerem. l. 6. *ſtray ſheep*, Eſai. liii. 6. *loſt ſheep*, Matth. xv. 24. So are all Chriſtians, that *live out of the bleſſed communion of the Church*. 'Tis a great ſin, ἀπαξιοῦν, to deſpiſe, and forſake the flock. No; Chriſtians muſt not be ſo many ſeverals: but we muſt gather our ſelves into an *holy Communion*, keep our ſelves within the Fold of the Church. If we belong not to the Flock, we belong not to the Shepherd, we make our ſelves a prey to the Wolf.

II. Sheep, they are *Animalia innocua*, of a very harmleſs, and inoffenſive nature. *Quod Columba in volatilibus, hoc Ovis in pecoribus, ſumma vivendi manſuetudo, ſumma ſimplicitas*; ſaith *Chryſoſtom*. And ſuch muſt Chriſtians be, endued with *Dove-like ſimplicity*, with *Lamb-like innocency*. Thus the Prophet (*Eſai.* lxv. 25.) deſcribes both the ſafety, and innocency of the Church: *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lie down with the Kid; and the Calf, and the young Lion ſhall be together, and a little Child ſhall lead them: There ſhall be no hurtfull thing in all my holy Mountains*. The moſt cruel diſpoſitions ſhall be tamed, and ſweetened, when they come once to be of this Flock of Chriſt. Cruel, injurious, miſchievous men, they are Bears and Tygers, not Sheep of Chriſt's Fold. Saul, *Lupus* Benjamin, *fit Agnus Chriſti*; before a ravenous Wolf, now become a meek Lamb.

III. Sheep are *animalia errabunda*; creatures exceeding ſubject to ſtray, if not tended, and kept in the better; unable to keep out of errour; and, having erred, unable to return. Such are Chriſtians, the beſt of them, if left to themſelves. How ſoon out of the right way are we, if God takes off his guidance, and leaves us unto our ſelves? Into what mazes, and thickets of errours, do we run our ſelves into? *I have gone aſtray like a Sheep, that is loſt: O ſeek thy ſervant*, Pſal. cxix. 176. *Moſes*, that famous Shepherd, was abſent but a while, and how ſoon did his flock run aſtray, and wander?

IV. Sheep are *Animalia debilia*, weak and ſhifleſs Creatures, unable to make reſiſtance. Other Creatures, Nature hath armed them with ſtrength, or skill, or courage, to ſafe-guard themſelves; but ſheep are deſtitute of all theſe. Take them from their Shepherd, and his protection, a ſheep is a weak creature, of no courage to look danger in the face, and make reſiſtance. And ſuch is the Church, if conſidered in it ſelf, and from under Chriſt's protection. Thus the Church bewails it's own weakneſs; *We are killed all the day long, we are accounted as ſheep for the ſlaughter*. The enemies of God's Church are like the *fat Bulls* of *Baſhan*: whereas God's people are like a few *helpleſs ſheep*.

V. Sheep,

A V. Sheep, they are *peculium Domini*; they are not, as many other Creatures, wilde, and of no mans's owning, Creatures at large: but they are the property, and poſſeſſion of an Owner. We may ſee a flock of ſome other Creatures, and yet no man claim them; but, if we ſee a Flock of ſheep, we all know, there is ſome man owns them. So God's Church, 'tis not ἀδέσποτος ἀγέλη, a looſe, ſcattered people; they are his proper poſſeſſion; they are *his choſen people*, the *ſheep of his paſture*, his peculiar people, the People of his purchaſe, his choice Inheritance.

Secondly; Here is his *Office*. Chriſt is a Shepherd. He vouch-
B ſafes to be called, and known by that name. *Hear, O thou Shepherd of* Iſrael, *thou that leadeſt* Joſeph *like a Flock*, Pſal. lxxx. 1. Our Saviour aſſumes this name to himſelf, *John* x. 11. *I am the good Shepherd.* All, that's requiſite in a Shepherd is fully in Chriſt.

I. A Shepherd is an employment of much Diligence, and Attention; κοπιωντικὸς ποιμὴν it requires a conſtant, continual inſpection over the Flock. Ye may ſee it in *Jacob*; day and night, he tended his ſheep. Other Creatures are not looked to at all times; but a Flock of ſheep muſt have daily attendance. Such is the watchfull care, that Chriſt hath over his Church. He is no *Idol-ſhepherd*, as *Zachary* (chap.
C xi. 17.) *that leaves the Flock*; but his eyes are always upon them. He walks in the midſt of his Churches. *Behold, I am with you always to the end of the World*, Matth. xxviii. 20.

II. A Shepherd is an employment of Tenderneſs, and Mildneſs, and of much Compaſſions. Ὅλῃ μὲ τῇ βακτηρίᾳ, τὰ πολλὰ δὲ τῇ σύριγγι; moſt with his Whiſtle, leaſt with his Staff; (*Nazianz.*) in the ordering of his Flock. If the ſheep ſtray, he ſeeks them carefully, brings them home gently, lays them on his ſhoulders. 'Tis the Butcher, not the Shepherd, that fetches blood of them. And ſuch a Shepherd is Chriſt, not like a Lyon over his Flock, but meek, and mercifull. Thus
D the Prophet foretells, and deſcribes him, *Eſai.* xl. 11. *He ſhall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, he ſhall gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſom, and ſhall gently lead them that are with young.* He is a *mercifull High-Prieſt*, full of tenderneſs, and compaſſion.

III. A Shepherd is an employment of Skill, he muſt be able to *know the ſtate of his flock*, Prov. xxvii. 23. What Diſeaſes they are ſubject to, and how to prevent, or cure them; what Food is wholſom for them, and how to ſupply them. Sure, in this alſo, Chriſt is a perfect Shepherd; he hath not *the inſtruments of a fooliſh Shepherd*, as *Zechary* ſpeaks, *Chap.* xi. 15. but is compleatly furniſhed with all
E abilities for the good of his Flock. He knows their Diſeaſes, and can cure them; their Dangers, and can prevent them; their Neceſſities, and can ſupply them; their Enemies, and can diſappoint them. *David* makes this joyfull, and thankfull, and confident acknowledgment, Pſal. xxiii. 1. *The* LORD *is my ſhepherd, I ſhall lack nothing.*

IV. A Shepherd is an employment, that requires ſtoutneſs, and Courage. Φυλακτικὸς muſt be ἐνπρακτικός. He, that will keep his Flock from

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from miſchief, muſt not fear the Wolf, or flee from him; but withſtand, and reſiſt him. Such a ſhepherd was *David*; there came a Bear and a Lyon to havock the ſheep, and he ſet upon them, and ſlew them. And ſuch a ſhepherd is Chriſt, *mighty to ſave his flock from their enemies.* He *cruſhes the jaw-bones of this Lyon, reſerves his darling flock from the power of the Woolf.*

V. A Shepherd is an employment of much Patience and Hardſhip: he muſt bear many a ſtorm, and blaſt, heat, and cold, undergo all weathers. He muſt endure much tediouſneſs in ſeeking, and reducing his poor ſtray ſheep. 'Twas *Jacob*'s lot, and much more our Saviour's. He ſerved an hard ſervice; ſtorms and tempeſts fell upon him in tending his flock; he was a man of afflictions, patiently undergoing all the toyl of his laborious employment. We read of ſome ſhepherds in the Scripture (and they no mean ones) that were even tired out, and ready to give over this troubleſom ſervice. *Moſes*, he was weary of his flock, they vext him ſo much. *Jeremy*, he's out of heart, and would fling off this employment. *Zechary* takes his *ſhepherd's ſtaff*, and breaks it in pieces. But our Saviour is a ſhepherd of an unwearied patience: He doth προφορεῖν, *bears with the waywardneſs of his unruly flock.* 'Twas his meat, and drink, to ſeek, and bring home his loſt ſheep. That's the ſecond, *Officium.*

Thirdly, Take notice of the Dignity, and Eminency of this Office. He is called *Magnus Paſtor*, *That great Shepherd.*

Great Shepherd! Surely, in the World's account, there is ſcarce good congruity 'twixt theſe two words, *Magnus Paſtor.* If a Shepherd, then we conclude him to be a mean man. Kings, and Prieſts, joyned together in the Scripture: Nay, Peaſants, and Prieſts, that's the World's Heraldry; ſo they rank them, *ſet* them *with the dogs of the flock*, as *Job* ſpeaks, *Chap.* xxx. 1. that's place good enough for them. *Shepherd*, *Prieſt*, *Miniſter*, all words of contempt, not to be found amongſt the Titles of Honour. Nay; what ſaith *Moſes*, *Gen.* xlvi. 34. *Every Shepherd is an abomination to the* Egyptians: So is a Church-Shepherd to profane Worldings. Well, let the Miniſtery be the ſcandal, and ſcorn of the world; let them ſtumble at it in their folly, or ſpurn at it in their pride: yet it is *the Wiſdom of God, and the Power of God.* A Shepherd, 'tis the Office of our Saviour, and the Glory of Chriſt.

So then, with, or without their leaves, Chriſt is *The great Shepherd.* Every way great.

I. *Magnus*, great in his Perſon. If the Son of God become a Shepherd, ſurely then a *great Shepherd.* *Bernard* obſerves it, and admires it, *Dominus exercituum fit Paſtor Ovium.* The *Lord of Hoſts*, attended with Troops of Angels, becomes a Shepherd to tend ſheep. 'Tis ſomewhat ſtrange to ſee King *Saul* come after the Herd out of the field, 1 *Sam.* xi. 5. And 'tis noted of *Uzziah*, another King of *Iſrael*, that *he loved Husbandry.* How wonderfull is it to ſee the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, with his Shepherd's Crook tending his flock! This humiliation of

of his Perſon is a great exaltation of the Office, makes him a great Shepherd. 'Tis ſaid of *Epaminondas*, a great man in his Time, that to put a diſgrace upon him, his Citizens choſe him Over-ſeer of the High-ways, to purge, and cleanſe them; but by his undertaking, and performing that Office, the Office became an Office of Dignity, and Honour, and the chiefeſt Citizens were ambitious of it. Surely, if the Son of God becomes a Shepherd, that Office is advanced in him; he is a great Shepherd.

II. *Magnus in ordine.* Chriſt is the great Shepherd; becauſe he is the ſupreme Shepherd, the Prince of Shepherds. All other Paſtours, of what Title, or Denomination ſoever, are inferiour to him. He is Ἀρχιποίμην, as Saint *Peter* ſtiles him, *The chief Shepherd*, the great Maſter of the Aſſemblies, the Arch-angel of the Churches. *Paſtorum Deus*, the true God of Shepherds. All hold their employment in dependence from him. That's the ſecond, great in Supremacy.

III. He is *Magnus in Ovili.* He is a great Shepherd; for his Flock is great; great, I mean in the value. His Flock is a flock of ſouls, and that's a precious Flock. One ſoul, 'tis of more worth than the whole world. The Flock of ſouls, under Chriſt's keeping, how precious are they! *Fiſhers of men, Shepherds of ſouls, Fathers of ſpirits*, are no ſmall employments. Saint *Peter* calls Chriſt *the Shepherd and Biſhop of our ſouls*, 1 Pet. ii. 25.

IV. He is *Magnus in amplitudine.* All the Flock of Chriſtians is under his inſpection. He is the only true Oecumenical Paſtour. All other Shepherds are *Paſtores portionarii*, but petty Shepherds, of a portion only of his Flock. But to be the Univerſal Shepherd of the whole Church, 'tis Chriſt's Prerogative. In reſpect of him, and his adminiſtration, there is but one Flock, and one Shepherd, *John* x. 16.

V. He is *Magnus in poſſeſſione*; the Flock is his own, he is the rightfull owner and poſſeſſour of it. *The flocks upon a thouſand hills, they are all his.* We, the beſt of us, are but ſervants to him, to tend his Flock. *Eccleſia data eſt Papæ*, ſaith the Pope in his claim. Nay, verily, Chriſt bids *Peter*, *Feed my ſheep*; they are Chriſt's, none of *Peter's*. *Gerſon* ſaith well, in the Name of the Church; *Ego non ſum tua, ſed tu meus es.* The Church, 'tis called *The flock of God*, Acts xx. 28. *He purchaſed it with his own blood.* We are but aſſiſtants, and helpers; not owners, and proprietaries. He ſets us on work, to him we owe our accounts; he will pay us our wages, or reckon with them that ſhall any ways defraud us.

VI. He is *Magnus in facultate*; great in his abilities to tend this Flock.

1. *Magnus in notitia*; a great Shepherd in knowing his Flock. He hath a ſpecial knowledge of every poor ſheep; he hath all their Names engraven on his Breaſt: *He calls his own ſheep by name*, Joh. x. 3.

2. *Magnus in Affectu*; great he is in his Love, and Affection to his Flock. He lays down his life for them. He hath purchaſed them with his own blood. See how he expreſſes his tenderneſs of his Flock;

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Peter, Loveſt thou me? Feed my Flock. Nathan's Parable of the Ew-Lamb, 'tis moſt true of Chriſt, and his beloved Flock. He hath brought it, and nouriſhed it up; nay, he lays it in his boſom, 'tis unto him as his Childe, it eats of his own meat, drinks of his Cup; nay, he feeds us with his own Fleſh, and makes us drink of his precious blood, to ſtrengthen, and nouriſh us up to Eternal life. A

3. *Magnus in Potentia.* He is of great Power to ſave, and preſerve them. *Who is this that comes from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah, travelling in his ſtrength, mighty to ſave?* Eſai. lxiii. 1. A Text applyed by Expoſitours to Chriſt's Reſurrection, and to his conqueſt over the enemies of his Church; his garments red with the blood of the Wolf, which would have worried his ſheep; but that he reſcued them, and ſhed the blood of their enemies, overcome Death, trampled on the head of the Serpent, and wrought Eternal ſalvation for his Flock. *Jacob*, though never ſo carefull, yet ſome of his Flock were loſt, or torn, or ſtoln away, *Gen.* xxxi. 39. Chriſt loſes not one of his ſheep: *Thoſe, that thou gaveſt me, I have kept, and none of them is loſt*, John xvii. 12. *My ſheep ſhall not periſh; no man is able to pluck them out of mine hand*, John x. 28. B

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D

ON

E

ON EASTER-DAY,

The Third Sermon.

JOHN xii. 24.

Verily, verily I ſay unto you, Except a corn of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

THe Context, at the twentieth *Verſe*, tells us of certain *Greeks* now at *Jeruſalem*. Not Ἑλληνισταὶ, but Ἕλληνες. *Greeks* they are called; not, as ſome *Jews* were called *Grecians*, either for their diſperſion among other Nations, or for the uſe of the *Greek* Tranſlation of the Holy Scripture: but by their Birth, and Original, they are termed *Greeks*; *Gentiles* by Nation, though well-affected to the *Jewiſh* Religion. Theſe, having heard of the Fame of *Jeſus*, ſued to the Apoſtles for admiſſion into his preſence, that they might ſee, and behold him. Our Saviour rejects not their motion; but takes notice of it, and yields to it as a fore-running ſign, and prognoſtick of the Calling, and Converſion of the *Gentiles*, ere long to be wrought by his Death, and Reſurrection.

And the words I have read unto you, are our Saviour's Divine Meditation upon his Death, and Paſſion; and an Aſſurance, and Declaration of the Glory, that ſhould redound to Chriſt; and of the many benefits, that ſhall ariſe to Man-kinde upon his Reſurrection.

And 'tis expreſſed by way of Similitude, eaſie, and obvious, and of common obſervation. Corn unſown, we all know, never multiplies, nor encreaſes; but bury it in the earth, caſt it into the furrows, then it ſprings up again, fructifies, and brings forth a plentiful Harveſt: ſo, had Chriſt been Incarnate onely, and lived amongſt us, he had not gained ſo much glory to himſelf, he had not brought ſo much benefit to man kinde; but his Sufferings, and Paſſion, his Death, and

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Burial, that made him fructifie, that brought a plentifull Increaſe of exaltation to himſelf, and ſalvation to the World. A

In the Words Five things offer themſelves to us, as moſt obſervable.

Firſt, Here is *Chriſti conditio*, our Saviour's ſtate, and condition. He is *granum tritici*; he compares himſelf to a grain of Wheat.

Secondly, Here is *Mortis qualitas*, the Nature, and Quality of his Death, and Burial; 'tis *ſeminatio*, 'tis a ſowing of this precious ſeed in the furrows of the earth.

Thirdly, Here is *Mortis neceſſitas*, the great neceſſity of his Death, and Paſſion: *Except it fall into th' ground, and die, it abides alone.* B

Fourthly, Here is *Mortis utilitas*, the great Good, that ſhall come by his Death: *But, if it die, it brings forth much fruit.*

Fifthly, Here is the *ſolemn Confirmation* of all this Truth; it hath the ſeal of Heaven ſet to it: *Amen, amen. Verily I ſay unto you:* and that we may call our *Faith's Aſſurance.*

The Firſt thing conſiderable is our Saviour's State, and Condition. He terms himſelf here *a grain of Wheat.* And the ſimilitude ſuits well with him; it ſets out his *nature*, and *condition* in divers reſpects.

Firſt, A *grain of wheat*, 'tis pure, and ſolid Corn, the choiceſt of all grains, ſevered from chaff, or any other vileneſs, that may debaſe it; eſpecially your ſeed corn (of which the Text ſpeaks) 'tis of the beſt, and cleaneſt. The Prophet *Eſay* tells us of this point of Husbandry, Chapter xxviii. 25. *The Plough-man*, ſaith he, *will caſt into the earth the principal Wheat.* And ſuch a grain of Wheat was our bleſſed Saviour: C

I. Solid, as the fulleſt grain. There was in him *the fat and Kidneys of the Wheat*, as *Moſes* terms them, *Deut.* xxxii. 14. The body, ſubſtance of all goodneſs was in him.

II. Pure, as the pureſt grain, that's cleanſed, and winnowed from duſt, or chaff; no defilement came near him; no ſinfull infirmity did ſoil, or pollute him. *Satan*, that great winnower, did ſift, and winnow him, firſt by *temptation*, then by *affliction*, but all in vain. *The Prince of the World cometh*, ſaith Chriſt, *and hath nothing in me*, Joh. xiv. 30. This winnower hath nothing for his pains, but only the chaff; but in Chriſt there was no chaff, and ſo he loſt his labour. Indeed, all mankinde, by nature, what were we, but Tares, and Cockle, and Darnel, an heap of Droſs? Nay, the beſt of us are even now, in the ſtate of regeneration, good corn, though we be mixed with much chaff. An unconverted ſinner, he is, as Tares, bad in the very Kinde: a Saint is, as winnowed corn, not fully ſevered from chaff, and droſs. But Chriſt was pure, and precious ſeed, *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners*, *Hebr.* vii. 26. winnowed from all uncleanneſs in his firſt conception. The Original, and Principle of his Conception was holy. He was *conceived by the Holy Ghoſt*: He had no tainted original. The ſoil, into which he was caſt, 'twas cleanſed. The *Virgin*, who conceived him, was ſanctified by the Spirit. We, all of us, are a corrupted ſeed, and D E

ſpring

A ſpring out of a corrupted ſoil: but this grain of Corn was pure, and precious; no refuſe Wheat, but choice, and principal.

Secondly, Chriſt was a *grain of Wheat*, and that, we know, is *mole parvum, ſed virtute magnum.* Look to the bulk, and bigneſs of it, 'tis ſmall, and contemptible; but, if you conſider that ſeminal vertue, that lies hid in it, and ſprings from it, then 'tis greatly eſtimable. And 'tis ſo with Chriſt. Look upon his outward appearance, ſo he ſeemed mean, and contemptible; but, conſider the power, and vertue, and efficacy, that was in him, then he will appear great, and admirable. Indeed, ſeed is to be eſteemed not by the quantity, but by the inward
B vertue, and efficacy of it. The *grain of Muſtard ſeed*, ſaith Chriſt, *is the leaſt of all ſeeds*; but it will grow into a *great Tree*. Thus was it with Chriſt; his Outſide was deſpicable, *Can this man ſave us?* He was deſpiſed of the People; *All that ſaw him, ſet him at naught*, Pſal. xxii. 7. *Eſay* ſets out his deſpicable condition, *Chap.* liii. 2. *He was deſpiſed, and rejected of men*; he was a ſcandal to the *Jews*, a ſcorn to the *Gentiles*: the *Jews* ſtumbled at him: the *Gentiles* ſpurned at him. He was *nullificamen Populi*, as *Tertullian* renders it; but yet he had a Divine vertue, and efficacy in him. *He was the power of God, and*
C *the wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. The fulneſs of Grace dwelt abundantly in him. The *Ark* typified, and repreſented him: it had an homely outſide, covered with Leather, and Hair-cloth; but the inſide all overlaid with Gold.

Thirdly, In a *grain of Wheat* there is a more terreſtrial, and earthy part, which rots, and putrifies, and corrupts in the ground; and there is a more vigorous, and lively part, that puts forth it ſelf, and ſprings up again. It was ſo likewiſe in Chriſt. His Humanity, that ſuffered, and decayed, and was made ſubject to death: the ſeed mouldered under the clots: but his Divinity, that was as the vigour, and ſtrength,
D and life of the ſeed; by the vertue of it he revived, and roſe again, and ſprung up plenteouſly. His Divinity, that did *coruſcare miraculis*: His Humanity, that did *ſuccumbere injuriis*: as *Leo ad Flavianum.* St. *Paul* ſets out theſe parts in Chriſt, *Rom.* i. 3. *He was of the ſeed of* David *according to the fleſh*; a mortal man from a mortal ſeed: but he appeared to be the Son of God, by the Reſurrection from the dead. That, which he had from *Adam*, was *from the earth, earthy*; but, in his Divinity, he was *the Lord from heaven, heavenly*. He was *crucified through weakneſs*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. xiii. 4 His infirm part, his Humanity, that ſuffered, and was crucified; but he lives by the
E Power of God: his God-head, and Divinity, that revived him again, and brought him from the dead. According to his Humanity, he was a Lamb ſlain; but, according to his Divinity, he was a victorious Lyon: He was both the Lamb of God, and the Son of God. Both theſe were neceſſary. The concurrence of both was prefigured in the Law. To the purging of a Leper, both a Bird ſlain, and a living Bird were to be offered. The ſlain Bird, that betokened his Paſſion; but the living Bird, that was let to fly, that betokened his Reſur-

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Reſurrection. He was both the Goat ſacrificed, and the Scape-goat likewiſe. He bare our ſins in his Paſſion, and he bare them away in his Reſurrection.

Fourthly, Granum Tritici, 'tis *granum utiliſſimum*; 'tis the moſt profitable Grain to the life of man. The grain of Wheat, 'tis the vital, and nouriſhing Grain. Our food, and foiſon comes chiefly from it. And Chriſt abundantly makes good the truth of this Similitude. He is *the bread of life, that gives life unto the World*, John vi. 35. Till we get this food, we feed only on empty huſks, that cannot nouriſh us; but Chriſt is the ſtaff of bread, and the ſtrength of our life. Thus, we ſee, he compares himſelf to thoſe two fruitfull Plants, that ſerve moſt for nouriſhment; the Vine, *John* xv. 5. that's fruitfull for Drink; and Wheat, that's fruitfull for Food: *Wine*, that *makes glad the heart*; and *Bread*, that *ſtrengthens man's heart*, Pſal. civ. 15. The ſtrengthening Bread, and the comforting, and refreſhing Wine; Chriſt becomes both to us. Theſe two are not only ſimilitudes, but raiſed to be Myſterious Sacraments, effectual Conveyances of our ſpiritual nouriſhment. This *grain of Wheat* was broken with the Flail of affliction, bruiſed, and broken, and grounded to duſt, baked, and made Bread in the Furnace of his Paſſion: This fruitfull Grape, this goodly bunch of *Eskol* was put into the Wine-preſs, the blood of this Grape was cruſhed out in his Paſſion: and both theſe make up our ſpiritual ſuſtenance; our Souls feed on this bleſſed Bread, and we drink of this ſacred Wine, that we may live by it.

There is one thing more in this Similitude. Chriſt here inſtances in κόκκῳ, in one corn, or grain of Wheat: wherein the ſpiritual ſeed ſurpaſſes the common condition of ſowing. Husbandmen do not ſow one grain of Wheat, but a greater quantity; ὃ χρεὶ, ἀλλὰ τῷ θυλάκῳ, as the *Greek* Proverb hath it, the basket-full, or the ſack full of ſeed is ſcattered into the ground; but here, in this holy Husbandry, Chriſt ſpeaks but of one grain of Wheat caſt into the earth.

I. Chriſt here ſpeaks of his own perſonal Death, and Reſurrection, and that is beſt repreſented by this one grain of Wheat. As the Father, diſcourſing of Chriſt's raiſing of *Lazarus* out of the grave, obſerves this difference 'twixt this Reſurrection, and the Reſurrection of all. *At the laſt day, all*, ſaith he, *that hear the voice of the Son of God, ſhall riſe again: but they only hear it, to whom it is directed. Then he will call all Fleſh out of their Graves: here he ſpeaks to one only*, Lazarus, *Come forth; though it may be other dead men were buried with* Lazarus *in the ſame Cave.* Though all Chriſtians are grains of Wheat, as our Saviour is; yet there is a ſingularity in Chriſt above all other Chriſtians, and ſo his Death, and Reſurrection, is diſtinct from ours: That, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, he may πρωτεύειν, and have the preheminence. Though he doth admit us into a participation; yet ſtill he obſerves ſome diſtance, and diſtinction. When he ſent his Diſciples tidings of his Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, he ſaith, *I go to my Father, and to your Father; to my God, and to your God.*

Even

A Even in this Community, he reſerves a propriety and excellency to himſelf. And,

II. As this is a perſonal, to 'tis a Myſtical Expreſſion; becauſe his Death, and Reſurrection, 'tis the Principle, and Original of our Reſurrection. *Adam univerſale principium mortis, Chriſtus univerſale principium vitæ. As in Adam all died, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* His Reſurrection 'twas perſonal, but not private: he roſe as a publick perſon, as the Author of Life to all his Members. *The Firſt-fruits are Chriſt's, then they that are Chriſt's at his coming.* Our Reſurrections are but *appendices Reſurrectionis Dominicæ.* We are
B *planted into the ſimilitude of his Death, and Reſurrection.* His Reſurrection hath an aſſimulating vertue in it, to turn ours likewiſe into the condition of his.

III. Take it in the Latitude, as this ſpeech may concern our Reſurrection. To very good purpoſe is it thus expreſſed. *A grain of wheat*, it ſets out the ſpecial, and perſonal aſſurance of our Reſurrection. Every grain of God's ſeed-corn ſhall riſe again. 'Tis not ſo in your ordinary Husbandry, ſome grains fall on the way-ſide, ſome rot under the clots, and never take root; 'tis well, if the moſt ſpring up again, ye reckon not of all: but every grain of this holy Husbandry ſhall ſpring
C up, and fructifie. *Curat ſingulos, ſicut univerſos.* He will raiſe every one in his due place and rank. Not a Saint ſhall be wanting, not a Member of them ſhall be loſt; nay, *not an hair of their head ſhall periſh. O, ſi ſic cuſtodiantur ſuperflua tua, in quanta ſecuritate ſit anima tua!* Not the leaſt Member of Chriſt ſhall periſh.

Secondly, A ſecond thing obſervable, is *Mortis qualitas*, the Quality and Condition of our Saviour's Death, and Burial, 'tis *ſeminatio*; 'tis here called a ſowing of this precious ſeed into the furrows of the earth, that's the true eſteem and account, that Chriſt makes of his
D Death and Burial. For underſtanding of this, we may take notice of three Eſtimates that were put upon our Saviour's Death.

Firſt, The firſt was the Eſtimate of Fleſh and Blood; what thought that of Chriſt's Death and Paſſion? Oh, far otherwiſe than of a ſowing. They counted no otherwiſe of it, than of a ſpilling, and perdition. The common People of the *Jews*, when Chriſt tells them of his death, they account it abſurd, and ridiculous: "What talk you of "dying? If thou beeſt the Chriſt, the *Meſſias ſhall abide for ever*; John xii. 34. Nay, St. *Peter* had no better opinion of our Saviour's Death. When Chriſt told him of his Death and Paſſion, *Matth.* xvi.
E 21. what ſaith *Peter? Oh, Maſter, far be it from thee; Lord, this ſhall not be unto thee.* He could not endure to hear, that Chriſt muſt die, he ſhould then loſe him for ever. The two Diſciples that went to *Emmaus*, thought all was loſt, now Chriſt was dead, and buried; "*We* "*hoped*, ſay they, *that he ſhould have redeemed Iſrael:* now no ſuch "matter, he is buried, and all our hope is buried with him, *Luke* xxiv. 21. This made the Diſciples ſo penſive, and ſorrowfull, when Chriſt acquainted them at any time with his Death, and Paſſion. Juſt as ſome ignorant

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ignorant man, unacquainted with the courſe of Husbandry, would think the Husband-man ſpills his Corn, and caſts it away, when he ſees him ſcatter it upon the furrows of the field. That's the Eſtimate of Fleſh and Blood; they think the righteous periſheth, when he dies. Chriſt's Paſsion ſeems no other to carnal men, than a Perdition.

Secondly, There is a ſecond Eſtimate, that was made of the Death and Burial of our Saviour, and that's the Eſtimate of Enmity, and Malice in the contrivers of his death. What thought they of his Death, and Burial? O, the *Jews*, that crucified him, intended his death ſhould be no ſowing; but his utter deſtruction. They thought to ſtop the courſe of his converſion of ſouls; they repined at thoſe who believed on him, conſulted which way to prevent him. *If we let him alone, all men will believe in him*, John xi. 48. "O, ſaith *Caiaphas* (full wiſely, as he "thought) let's put him to death, get him under ground once; that "will put an end to all his proceedings. Nail him to the Croſs, ſeal up his Sepulchre, ſet a ſtrong guard about it: and then they think they are ſure, they ſhall hear no more of him. Caſt *Jonas* into the Sea, and all will be well; there will be an end of him, and of all his Propheſyings. Thus the Brethren of *Joſeph* thought to make a riddance of him, by ſelling him into *Egypt*; they would prevent his Dreams of preferment; they would make ſure, the Corn of Wheat ſhould never riſe up to a Sheaf, to which their Sheafs ſhould bow down, and do homage. That's the ſecond Eſtimate, that Malice puts upon our Saviour's Death, and Burial: 'Tis no ſowing, but a deſtruction. But,

Thirdly, Then ſee what's the Eſtimate that Faith puts upon Chriſt's Death and Burial. O, Chriſt aſſures our Faith, that his Death and Burial, 'tis no other than a ſowing of a precious ſeed into a fruitfull ſoil. 'Tis no ſpilling of it, as carnal Reaſon ſuppoſed; 'tis no deſtroying of it, as Malice intended: but the committing of a grain of Corn to a fruitfull ſoil. 'Tis *ſeminatio*, and that implies two things:

I. Sowing, 'tis *Opus intelligentiæ*. Sowing, 'tis a chief part of the Husband-man's skill. Thus *Eſay* deſcribes the work of the Husband-man, *Eſai.* xxviit. 25. *When the Plough-man ſcatters, and caſts in his principal Wheat into the furrows, his God doth inſtruct him to diſcretion, and doth teach him; this comes from the* LORD *of Hoſts, which is wonderfull in counſel, and excellent in working.* There is great art, and skill, and cunning, in ſowing. And thus was Chriſt's Death, and Paſsion, wiſely and wonderfully ordered by God. 'Twas not brought to paſs caſually; but God the Father, the great *Husband-man* of his Church (as our Saviour calls him, *John* xv. 1.) intended, purpoſed, decreed his Death. He ordered all the particulars, and circumſtances of it, choſe the ſeaſon for ſowing, ſet the appointed time when he ſhould die, to an hour, *Verſe* 23. choſe the ſoil where he ſhould be ſown; foretold the very furrow, into which he ſhould be caſt, *Joſeph*'s Sepulcher, *Eſai.* liii. 9. *He made his Grave with the rich in his death*; he forelayd, and ordered all the circumſtances, and

A and inſtruments of his Paſſion. That's the firſt; Sowing, 'tis *Opus intelligentiæ.*

II. Sowing, 'tis *Opus ſpei.* Sowing, 'tis a word, and work of Hope. He that ſows, looks to receive his ſeed again. He, that ploughs, *ploughs in hope*, ſaith *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 10. Such was the Death and Burial of our Saviour; he was put into the Grave in a full aſſurance of a Reſurrection. This bleſſed hope was fore-told by *David*, Pſal. xvi. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in Hell, nor ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption: Thou wilt ſhew me the paths of life.* There was a path of life from theſe chambers of death. Thus, we ſee, when Chriſt mentions
B his Death, ſtill he ſweetens it with the hope, and aſſurance of his Reſurrection, *Matth.* xvi. 21. *The Son of man muſt be killed, and be raiſed again the third day.* He ſtill acquaints them with it, and with the very time, and ſeaſon of it, *The third day. He roſe again the third day, according to the Scriptures*, ſaith Saint *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 3. What Scripture pointed it out? *Hoſea* did it, *Chap.* vi. 2. *After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raiſe us up, and we ſhall live in his ſight.* As in the Creation, 'twas the third day, that the *earth brought forth its fruit, whoſe ſeed was in it ſelf*; ſo, in this new Creation,
C on the third day was this bleſſed fruit raiſed out of this earth. Still our Saviour mentions his Reſurrection, as the conſequent of his Paſſion. Carnal Reaſon thinks it an hopeleſs, and impoſsible thing, that a Dead man ſhould revive, and riſe again; but what ſaith Saint *Peter?* Acts ii. 24. *God hath raiſed Chriſt up, having looſed the pains of death; becauſe it was not poſſible he ſhould be holden of it. O, 'tis impoſsible, he ſhould riſe*, ſaith Infidelity: nay, (ſaith Faith, and Hope) *'tis impoſsible, but he ſhould riſe again.* St. *Paul*, with confidence, avows it, ſpeaking to *Agrippa*: Acts xxvi. 8. *Why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible, that God ſhould raiſe the dead?* Who can hinder the corn from ſpringing, or the Sun from riſing? *It tarries not for man, nor waits for the*
D *Sons of men*, Micah v. 7.

We proceed to the next thing conſiderable, and that is,

Thirdly, *Mortis neceſſitas*; the Neceſsity of Chriſt's Death: *Except the corn of Wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abides alone.* It was expedient, yea neceſſary, that Chriſt ſhould die.

But then the Enquiry muſt be, *What kinde of neceſsity brought Chriſt to his Death?*

Firſt, It was not *Neceſsitas Naturæ*: He died not out of any natural neceſsity, as we mortal men do. By vertue of his God-head, to which his Humane Nature was united, he could have communicated
E an impaſsible immortality unto his Body. Nay, Divines conclude, that Immortality, 'twas *Dos humanitatis*, 'twas the Dowry of his Humanity, by vertue of thoſe myſtical eſpouſals of his Fleſh, 'twas due to his Humane Nature; but for great cauſe ſuſpended; for the ſuffering of Death.

Secondly, It was not *Neceſsitas Violentiæ*: his Life was not in the power of any outward violence: *No man takes my life from me, I lay*

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it down of my ſelf, John x. 18. Had he not yielded unto death, he could not be enforced. *Sampſon* muſt ſuffer himſelf to be bound, or the *Philiſtines* could not have over-maſtered him. But, A

Thirdly, It was *Neceſſitas Ordinationis divinæ*. God had given him a Body to die. He was not only corn, but ſeed. But ſeed muſt be ſown. You keep not your ſeed-corn always in your Granary; but 'tis caſt into the ground. *Pereat in agro, non in horreo*; it muſt be buried in the earth, not reſerved, and kept above ground. *For this came he into the world.* This made Chriſt ſo willing to ſubmit to Death. How did he rebuke *Peter*, when he diſſwaded him from it? This made him put himſelf into the hands of his murderers. *Shall I not drink of the cup, my Father gives me?* John xviii. 11. This made him forbear the help of any reſcue. All the Angels of Heaven would have run to his reſcue; but how then ſhould the *Scripture* be fulfilled? ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* xxvi. 54. B

Fourthly, There was *Neceſſitas Finis*. If Chriſt die not, the work he came to do, had not been effected. If the corn die not, it remains alone. His Natural body might have been glorified; but not his myſtical: his Natural body might have been glorified by vertue of his Hypoſtatical union; but his Myſtical body (which we are) was to be ſaved, and glorified by vertue of his Paſſion. Had he not died, we may invert the Speech of the *Jews*: *He ſaves himſelf, but others he could not ſave*: Yea, we may invert the Speech of the Pſalmiſt, *What profit is there in my life, if I go not down into the pit?* No, the Grave muſt praiſe thee, that muſt declare thy Truth. Corn remains corn in the Granary; but it remains alone, there is no hope of any Harveſt, if it be not ſown. All, that Chriſt did, the fruit, and accompliſhment of it, depended on his death, was made good by his Paſſion; they all lead to this, as to their end, and aim. C

I. His Incarnation furniſhed him with a Body to ſuffer.

II. His Circumciſion was a Pledge, and Obligation, that all his blood ſhould be ſhed in his Paſſion. D

III. His Sanctification, that made him a fit body, holy, and unſpotted, and meet to ſuffer.

IV. His Obedience that was not full, till it came *uſque ad mortem*, till he was *obedient unto death*.

V. His Merits were not applicable to us, but by vertue of his Death: his blood muſt firſt ranſom, and redeem us, before his merits could be of any avail to us. We ſee, that ſmall fruit was reaped before his Death. His perſonal preachings gained but few: Saint *John* obſerves it, *John* xii. 37. Though *he had done ſo many Miracles before them, yet they believed not in him*; but the fulneſs of Grace was reſerved till after his Paſſion, and Reſurrection. And that brings in the fourth thing obſervable; that is, E

Fourthly, *Mortis utilitas*; the great good, that ſhal come by his death, *If the corn of Wheat die, it brings forth much fruit.* And ſuch was the death of Chriſt; it fructified exceedingly. Take it in three Particulars:

Firſt,

A *First*, *Fructificavit ſibi gloriam*; great glory accrewed to him by his Death and Paſsion, and the conſequent of it in his Reſurrection.

I. He got a glorious Victory over Death, and all his, and our ghoſtly enemies. Hell, and all the powers of Hell, all conſpired againſt him, and now, by his Death, all are ſubdued, and vanquiſhed by him. He *ſpoiled Principalities and Powers*, trampled them under his feet. That's the glory of his Paſsion; by Death he entred into the Grave, the Hold of death, and brake down thoſe Bars of the Grave, ſet that Iron gate open, that was ſhut up upon him.

B II. He got a glorious Triumph to himſelf in his Reſurrection; he roſe gloriouſly. His Croſs and Paſſion, was *Campus victoriæ*; but his Reſurrection, that was *Currus Triumphi*. He roſe gloriouſly. His Body was ſown in weakneſs; but it was raiſed in power, cloathed with glory and immortality. The Apoſtle tells us, *We ſow bare corn, but it ſprings not up bare corn, as 'twas ſown: but it comes up with the beauty of the ſtalk, the flouriſhing of the ear*; ſo Chriſt roſe a glorified body. That precious ſeed was carried out weeping; but he returns with full ſheaves, rejoycing. *Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer, and ſo to enter into his glory?* Luke xxiv. 26.

C III. He gained *Gloriam Nominis*; by his Paſſion he did merit, and at his Reſurrection he obtained the glory of his Name. Now he comes in Triumph, with his Name written on his *Veſture, and on his Thigh, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, Revel. xix. 16. He was, *for the ſuffering of Death, crowned with glory and honour*, Hebr. ii. 9. *He was obedient to the death of the Croſs, therefore God highly exalted him, and gave him a Name above every Name; a Name, to whom all knees both in heaven and earth, do bow.* By his Reſurrection, *he was mightily declared to be the Son of God.* By his Reſurrection, he was not firſt made the Son of God, as *Socinus* wickedly affirms; but yet he was
D openly, and ſolemnly proclaimed, and publiſhed to be the eternal Son of the ever-living God. That's the firſt, *Sibi gloriam.*

Secondly, *Fructificavit hominibus ſalutem.* By his Paſſion, and at his Reſurrection, to man-kinde he brought forth much fruit. Indeed, the Glory was his; but the profit and benefit doth redound to us. In this holy Harveſt Chriſt deals with us, as Land-lords do ſometimes with their Tenants, that let their Crop to halves: the glory of it Chriſt reſerves to himſelf; but the profit, and benefit he vouchſafes unto us. *For us he died, for us he roſe again*; the main harveſt is ours. The Angels (thoſe *volatilia cæli*, thoſe birds of Heaven) picked up ſome
E grains of this Harveſt; but the full ſheaves belong to us.

Three rich, and glorious fruits and benefits we reap by it:

I. The New Covenant of the Goſpel, that gracious Covenant, and Teſtament, wherein he is pleaſed to treat with us again after our firſt forfeiture in *Adam*; again to entertain us upon gracious terms of condeſcenſion, and to give us a good hope through grace; all this was founded, and eſtabliſhed, and fully ratified by his Death, and

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Reſurrection. Hence it is, that his blood is called *the blood of the New-Teſtament*, upon which it was founded. And, will you know the tenour of this Covenant? St. *Paul* ſets it down, *Rom.* x. 9. *If thou wilt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.* A

II. A ſecond fruit, and benefit we reap by his Death, and Reſurrection, is forgiveneſs of ſins, reconciliation with God; that's merited by his Death, accompliſhed by his Reſurrection. He, as our ſurety, lay under the arreſt of Death; he hath diſcharged our debt, cancelled our bond, and, for our behoof, was enlarged out of the priſon of the grave, and ſo wrought our liberty. St. *Paul* expreſſes it, Rom. iv. 25. *He was delivered to death for our ſins, and roſe again for our juſtification.* B

III. The gift of the Holy Ghoſt, the ſhedding forth of that, that was a fruit of his Death and Reſurrection. *The Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe that Jeſus was not yet glorified*, John vii. 39. When he was riſen, *umbra Petri* did more, than *fimbria Chriſti*; the ſhadow of *Peter* healed more diſeaſes, than the touch of his garment before his Reſurrection. His Death purchaſed it; his Reſurrection performed it. The Apoſtle aſcribes it to his Paſſion, *Hebr.* xiii. 12. *Jeſus, that he might ſanctifie the people with his own blood, ſuffered without the gate:* and the ſame Apoſtle, in the ſame place, aſcribes it to his Reſurrection, Verſe 20. *The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, through the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work.* His bodily death begets in us a dying to ſin: his bodily Reſurrection, that works in us a ſpiritual reſurrection to holineſs of life. C

Then his Death, and Reſurrection,

Thirdly, Fructificavit Eccleſiæ incrementum; it wrought a plentifull harveſt in the converſion of the world to our Chriſtian Religion. *Moriatur granum tritici, & ſurgat gentium ſeges*, ſaith *Bernard.* From that one grain of wheat ſprung that huge harveſt of Converts, and Beleivers. What *Paul* ſaith of *Abraham*, is moſt fully true of Chriſt; *There ſprang even of one, and him truely dead, as many as the ſtars of the skie in multitude, and as the ſand which is by the Sea-ſhore, innumerable*, Hebr. xi. 12. *Eſai* propheſies of this great increaſe, *Chap.* liii. 10. *When he hath made his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, and the work of the* LORD *ſhall proſper in his hand. David* foretells this plentifull harveſt, and encreaſe of Chriſt's Kingdom, *Pſal.* lxxii. 16. *There ſhall be an heap of corn in the top of the Mountains, his fruit ſhall ſhake like Lebanon.* This was ſhadowed out by that great multitude of fiſhes, which the Diſciples took after Chriſt's Reſurrection. He bids them caſt in their net, and preſently they were not able to draw it, *for the multitude of fiſhes*: This prefigured the great ſucceſs of the Goſpel after Chriſt's Reſurrection. *What! ſhall a Nation be born in one day?* ſaith the Prophet *Eſai.* Yes, ſaith St. *Peter*, *The day of his Reſurrection hath begot us again. Sepulchrum Chriſti*, 'tis *uterus Reſurrectionis*; 'tis D E

as

A as the womb of his Birth, 'tis as the dew of the morning, upon the face of the whole earth.

Fifthly, There is yet one thing more conſiderable in the Text, and that's the ſolemn Ratification of it: *Amen, Amen*; *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you.* And this Ratification, 'tis to great good purpoſe.

Firſt, It confirms the Truth, yea, the neceſſity of Chriſt's Paſſion, and Reſurrection. This aſſurance, 'tis the Broad Seal of Heaven, ſet to this principal Article of our Chriſtian profeſſion. He, that is *the Amen, the faithfull and true witneſs*, teſtifies this to the Churches, *Rev.* i. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I live for evermore,* B *Amen*; *and have the Keyes of Death, and of Hell.* Chriſt confirms this Article of his Paſſion, and Reſurrection, with an *Oportet: Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer theſe things, and ſo to enter into his glory? Oportet*, ſo it muſt be: The Father hath decreed it, our Saviour hath undertaken it, our ſins required it, no ſalvation without it.

Secondly, This Aſſeveration exacts our Faith, and firm belief of it. And it was no more than needful to ſeal up this Truth with this ſtrong Confirmation; for the Faith of the Diſciples ſtartled at this Doctrine, and could not eaſily aſſent to it. When Chriſt tells them of his Death and Paſſion, they could not endure it, their hearts were heavy, and C ſorrowfull, they could not digeſt it. When he tells them of his Reſurrection, they could not conceive it, they wondered what his *riſing from the dead ſhould mean*, Mark ix. 10. This vital, and ſaving Novelty Chriſt commends to their Faith with all earneſtneſs, *Luke* ix. 44. *Let theſe Sayings ſink down into your ears*; I, and into your hearts too. St. *Paul* makes theſe two Truths the ſum and ſubſtance of the Goſpel, 1 *Cor.* xv. 3, 4. *That Chriſt died for our ſins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he roſe again the third day, according to the Scriptures. By this Faith ye are ſaved*, ſaith St. *Paul*. If this Faith be not believed, *our Preaching is in vain, ye are yet in your ſins.*

D *Thirdly*, This Aſſeveration expreſſes our Saviour's ſtrong meditation, and firm reſolution to make this Truth good. He puts himſelf into a deep premeditation of his Death, and Paſſion, and of that glory that ſhould follow upon it. The thoughts of his Death were not unwelcom to him, nor the hopes of Glory fickle and uncertain. Alaſs! how do we ſtartle at the thoughts of Death, and lay them out of our minds? whereas we ſee our Saviour frequently, ſeriouſly, affectionately meditates of his departure out of the world. In the greateſt manifeſtations of his glory, he ſtill inſiſts upon the thoughts of his Death, and Paſſion.

E I. Here, when the *Gentiles* come to honour him, and to wonder at him, preſently he calls to minde his Death, and Burial.

II. When *Peter* made that noble confeſſion of him, *Thou art the Son of the living God*, Matth. xvi. 16. He preſently falls into the ſpeech of his Death, and Paſſion. *The Son of God*, ſaith *Peter*: well, ſaith Chriſt, *The Son of man muſt ſuffer many things, and be put to death, and riſe again.*

III. Upon

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III. Upon his glorious Transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*, when God the Father put great honour, and glory upon him, then he ſeaſons this glory with the meditation of his Death, and Paſsion. *He talked with Moſes and Elias, of his deceaſe, which he ſhould accompliſh at Jeruſalem.* He acquaints his Diſciples with his Paſsion, and his riſing from the dead, *Matth.* xvii. 22, 23. This purpoſe was firmly ſetled in his heart. God the Father did not lead him unknowingly to his Paſsion, (as *Abraham* did *Iſaac*, when he was to ſacrifice him, and ſurpriſed him on the ſudden) but what ſaith Chriſt? *I lay down my life, and I take it up again; this commandment I received of my Father.*

For Uſe, and Application:

Let us bring this Text home to our ſelves:

First, In a threefold Meditation.

Secondly, In a threefold Imitation.

Thirdly, In a threefold Comfort, which this Text affords us.

First, In a threefold Meditation.

Firſt Meditation let be, *Via afflictionis, via ad gloriam.* Chriſt's ſufferings and afflictions, they lead him to glory. Then meditate upon the uſe, and benefit of afflictions. Chriſt was conſecrated by afflictions: ſo are Chriſtians, and ſanctified by them. A Chriſtian, that abounds moſt with affliction here, his portion of glory ſhall be greateſt hereafter. *As our ſufferings abound, ſo do our conſolations*, ſaith Saint *Paul. They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy.* Hard Weather, and a cold Winter is good for your Corn, it will bring a plentiful Harveſt. Thus *Paul* chears up *Timothy*, bids him endure afflictions; *Remember*, ſaith he, *that Jeſus Chriſt was raiſed from the dead*, 2 Tim. ii. 8. Let that encourage thee.

Second Meditation, *Via mortis, via ad vitam.* Conſider by Chriſt's example, that the way to gain life, was firſt to loſe it. We muſt ſowe our corn, if we mean to reap it; lay down our lives willingly, if we mean to enjoy them. They that mean to be gainers in this holy Husbandry, muſt be Adventurers. Ye muſt endure a ſeed-time by Death, if you will have an Harveſt to Eternal life. We muſt be *implanted into the ſimilitude of Chriſt's Death*, if we look to be *implanted into the ſimilitude of his Reſurrection*, Rom. vi. 5. *Moriendo vivam*, is the Chriſtians Motto. Through the valley of Death, lies the path of Life. *Morere, ut vivas; ſepelire, ut reſurgas*: Aug.

Third Meditation, *Vis malignantium, via ad victoriam.* Malicious Perſecution breeds, and brings to us the greater exaltation. The *Jews* they thought to deſtroy Chriſt by death; but they made him the more glorious. They are mad men, to think the Corn is deſtroyed, when 'tis caſt into the earth; it encreaſes the more by it. 'Tis ſo with the Church; theſe Perſecutions, they are ſo many prunings of the Vine; 'twill be the more fruitfull. *Sanguis Martyrum, ſemen Eccleſiæ.* The Church proſpers moſt, when the World moſt maligns it. *Pharaoh* thought to root out the *Iſraelites*: the more he oppreſſed them, the more they encreaſed, as *Jethro* obſerved it: In *that thing wherein they dealt*

A *dealt proudly, he was above them*, Exod. xviii. 11. *The wrath of man ſhall turn to thy praiſe*, ſaith *David*. *Trucidantur, & multiplicantur*; ſaith *Auguſtine* of Chriſtians. *In all theſe things we are more than conquerors.*

That's our threefold Meditation.

Secondly, Here we muſt think of a threefold Imitation of our Lord, and Saviour:

Firſt is, *Chriſtianus granum.* What Chriſt is, a Chriſtian muſt be carefull to be, a grain of good Wheat. Be ſure we prove good corn, if we mean to be ſown with good ſucceſs. Take heed, we prove not Thiſtles in ſtead of Wheat. Tares, and Chaff, are for the fire; but
B good Corn for the furrow. God will ſowe none but good Corn, in his field; 'tis the *Envious man, that ſowes Tares, whoſe end is to be burned*, Matth. xiii. 27. *Sir, didſt not thou ſowe good ſeed in thy Field? from whence then hath it Tares? He ſaid, An Enemy hath done this*, &c. Matth. iii. 12. *He will burn up the Chaff with unquenchable fire.*

Second Imitation of Chriſt, is, *Mors præcogitanda.* We ſaw Chriſt abounded in the thoughts of Death; ſo ſhould a good Chriſtian. Premeditation will breed Preparation, overcome Fear, diſpoſe us to a chearfull entertainment of Death. See, how Chriſt fits you, and furniſhes you with helps to this duty, out of your Profeſſion. Put not thy
C Plough into the ground; but think of thine own furrow, into which thou muſt be caſt, thy Grave and Burial. A Chriſtian ſhould ſpiritualize all the ordinary paſſages of his ſecular employment. *Break up the fallow ground*, ſaith *Jeremy*, in ſorrow, and repentance: *Sowe not among Thorns*, but *in ſubacto ſolo*, in an honeſt heart, as in a good ſoil.

Third Imitation; *Mors fructuoſa*: take care thy death be fruitfull. Learn that of Chriſt, that thy death may be uſefull, and profitable. So die, that God may gain glory, Religion may be honoured, thy brethren confirmed, and edified in the practice of piety. This will make our death to be precious, as *David* ſpeaks. When God, and his grace is
D magnified in our Bodies, by life, and by death: when we ſo die, that our Death gives teſtimony to the power of Religion; that it is able to overcome in us the fear of death, the love of life, and to account it beſt to be with Chriſt.

Thirdly, The Text affords us a threefold Comfort.

Firſt, Mors, ſementis; that's a word of Hope. Our death is a ſowing; there is hope in that. We fall into our graves, as ſeed into the furrows. And what we ſowe, we do not look it ſhould periſh, but be preſerved. We owe the comfort of this hope to our Chriſtian Religion; that bids us not judge of Death, as *men without hope*. The grave of a Chri-
E ſtian, 'tis a fruitfull ſoil. The Church-yard (as the *High-Dutch* call it) is *Gods-acre*, where he ſowes his ſeed. *Cineres Sanctorum ſunt ſemina immortalitatis.* The Scripture, to beget this hope in our death, uſes two hopefull, and comfortable expreſsions.

I. This of Sowing; and there is Hope in that:

II. That of Sleeping; and that's a word of Hope: *If he ſleep, he ſhall do well*; ſaid the Diſciples, when *Lazarus* was dead. Our graves

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graves are κοιμητηρια our ſleeping-places, *beds of reſt*, as the Prophet *Eſai* calls them; *When the righteous die, they enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds*, Eſay lvii. 2.

Secondly, Reſurrectio, Meſsis; that's a word of Joy. Our Reſurrection ſhall be a fruitfull Harveſt to us, and there is Joy in that. *They ſhall joy as in the joy of Harveſt*, Eſai. ix. 3. *They that carry out good ſeed weeping, ſhall*, in God's good time, *return with joy, and bring their ſheaves with them.* Harveſt doth not only return you your ſeed: but multiplies it to you; whole ſheaves, for a few grains of Corn. *Herod* had ſo much Divinity in him, as to confeſs this: *John the Baptiſt is riſen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do ſhew forth themſelves in him*, Mark vi. 14. Here is the comfort and joy of a Chriſtian: *We are God's Husbandry*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks. Our Reſurrection will be our Harveſt; the Angels ſhall be Reapers, *Matth.* xiii. 39. Heaven the Granary, into which we ſhall be gathered. The ſorrow of our Seed-time in our Death and diſſolution, will be abundantly recompenſed by the joy of our Harveſt at the Reſurrection. *Si times Mortem, ama Reſurrectionem.*

Thirdly, Primitiæ, Chriſtus; and that's a word of Aſſurance, in that Chriſt was, this day, the firſt-fruits of this Harveſt in his Reſurrection: and the Firſt-fruits were a pledge of the whole Harveſt. This was repreſented upon the day of his Reſurrection: *Many dead Saints came out of their graves, after his Reſurrection*, Matth. xxvii. 53. As *Chryſoſtom*, "when the Stomach caſts up that it cannot hold, "it brings up other things with it. 'Twas prefigured in the Law; they were to bring their firſt-ripe ſheaf of Corn, and preſent it to God: that was an aſſurance of their following Harveſt. *Firſt Chriſt, the firſt-fruits; then they that are Chriſt's at his coming*, 1 Cor. xv. 23. His Reſurrection, 'tis *Clavis reſurrectionis noſtræ.* His Reſurrection was not only the Example, but the Principle of our Reſurrection: and doubt not of thine own. Thoſe that are Chriſt's, he will bring with him; *and we ſhall ever be with the Lord.*

ON

ON EASTER-DAY,

The Fourth Sermon.

St. JOHN ii. 19.

Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid unto them, Deſtroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raiſe it up.

THE Time, and the Text have a mutual correſpondence, and ſuit well together. The Feaſt, which we now celebrate, 'tis the Holy Commemoration of our *Chriſtian Paſs-over*, when Chriſt, the true *Paſchal Lamb* was offered up for us upon the Altar of the Croſs. And the Time, when theſe words were uttered by our Saviour, was in the revolution of the like Solemnity. They were ſpoken, when the *Jews* Paſs-over was at hand, and Chriſt was now at *Jeruſalem* to celebrate that Feſtival, *Verſe* 13.

And as the ſeaſon of the Words is ſuitable, proper for the Time: ſo the ſum, and ſubſtance of them, the materials of which they conſiſt, are exceeding pertinent; they come cloſe and home to the preſent occaſion. The Paſſion of our Saviour, and his Reſurrection, his ignominious Death, and his glorious riſing to Life again, are the two great Myſteries which the Faith of the Church doth at this time commemorate. And the Text, 'tis pregnant with theſe two Truths. It repreſents theſe two great Articles of Faith to our meditation. Behold, it *ſets before us Death and Life*, as *Moſes* ſpeaks.

First, The Death of our Saviour, and his bloody Paſſion, that's in the former part of this Text, *Deſtroy this Temple*; and ſo they did to the uttermoſt, they defaced and deſtroyed the ſacred Temple of Chriſt's Body, they cried, *Down with it, down with it, even to the ground; there was not left one ſtone upon another, that was not thrown down.* That was the work of *Good-Friday*; the miſerable ruin of this Temple at his Death and Paſsion. And then,

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Secondly, Here is ſet before us his Reſurrection to life, in the latter part of the Text; *Let them deſtroy this Temple, I will raiſe it up again in three days.* The third day he roſe again from the dead, repaired theſe ruins, laid the foundation of this Temple, and reared up the roof too, finiſhed it, and beautified it, and made it more glorious. *The Bricks were fallen down; but he built it up again with hewn ſtones: the Sycomores were cut down; but he changed them into Cedars.* The glory of this Temple, in his Reſurrection, exceeded, and ſurpaſſed the firſt glory of this Temple in his Incarnation.

Indeed, theſe two Truths, our Saviour's Paſſion, and our Saviour's Reſurrection, are the two main fundamental Articles of our Chriſtian Faith; the two main Pillars upon which the whole Building of God's Church doth reſt. The Scripture makes them the Summary, and *Compendium*, and Abridgment of the Goſpel.

Firſt, Chriſt reduces the Scripture to theſe two Heads, *Luke* xxiv. 45. *He opened their underſtandings, that they might underſtand the Scripture, and ſaid unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and to riſe from the dead the third day.*

Secondly, He makes it the Sum of that Commiſſion which he received from the Father; *I lay down my life, that I may take it up again: this commandment I received of my Father*, John x. 18.

Thirdly, Saint *Paul* makes the belief of theſe two Truths, the matter of our righteouſneſs, and juſtification, *Rom.* iv. 24. it ſhall be imputed to us for righteouſneſs to believe, that *he was delivered to death for our offences, and was raiſed again for our juſtification.*

Fourthly, 'Tis or ſhould be, the aim, and argument of all our Preaching: the Apoſtle makes it ſo, 1 *Cor.* xv. 3. That, which he delivered to them, was this, *That Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures*, and, *that he roſe again the third day according to the Scriptures.* If we preach not this, *our preaching is in vain*; if you believe not this, *your Faith is in vain, ye are yet in your ſins*, Verſe 14.

Fifthly, Theſe two are the main Fountains of all Grace and Holineſs; the two powerfull Principles of all Sanctification; that, from whence the new life of a Chriſtian muſt ſpring, and ariſe. Thus *Paul* deſcribes the life of Chriſtianity: *Phil.* iii. 10. he calls it *a Conformity to Chriſt's Death*, and *the feeling of the power of his Reſurrection.* And ſo again, *Rom.* vi. 5. He calls our *mortification, and ceaſing from ſin*, a *planting of us into the death of Chriſt*; and our *vivification, and living unto God*, a *planting of us into his Reſurrection.* A Chriſtian muſt be engraffed into theſe two ſtocks, Chriſt's Death, and Chriſt's Reſurrection, and draw, and ſuck the ſap of Grace from theſe two roots; or he will never be ſanctified.

For the words themſelves, they are part of an Hiſtory of Chriſt's ſolemn entring into the Temple, and reforming the Abuſes of it; and he doth it in the Spirit of a true Reformer, with much zeal, and with as much moderation: He caſts out the Abuſes; but doth not forbid the Duties of the Temple. He *whips out the Merchants*, but not the Miniſters

A Miniſters of the Houſe of God: overthrows the *Tables of the Money-changers*; but ranſacks not the treaſury of the Temple: nay, he countenances that, and gave encouragement to it, *Mark* xii.

Here is now fulfilled in the Hiſtory, what was formerly foretold in the Prophecy, *Hag.* ii. 7. *The deſire of all Nations ſhall come, and I will fill this houſe with Glory.* That Prediction hath here its accompliſhment. *The Lord is in his holy Temple. The Lord, whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come to his Temple,* ſaith *Malachy*, iii. 1. And he *comes like Refiner's fire, and like Fuller's ſoap*: the Refiners fire, to conſume the droſs, not to deſtroy the metal; like Fuller's ſoap, to fetch out the ſtains,
B but not to eat out the ſubſtance, and make ſpoil of all. And our Saviour, meeting with oppoſition in this harſh, but holy work, and queſtioned by the *Jews, by what authority he did theſe things*, he returns them this Anſwer, as the Seal and Warrant of his Power, and Authority: *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raiſe it up.*

For the Words themſelves, we will take them into a twofold Conſideration.

Firſt, Let us conſider them in their Purpoſe, and Intendment, as they ſtand in connexion, and relation to the *Jews* Objection.

Secondly, We will conſider them abſolutely in themſelves, and in
C their ſeveral Particulars.

Firſt, For their Purpoſe and Connexion, it ſtands thus. Our Saviour, obſerving the many abuſes and prophanations of the Temple, his Spirit was ſtirred within him, and he caſts out the defilements, and pollutions of that holy place. The *Jews*, though they were much offended at this ſtrange reformation (a redreſs of abuſes in God's Worſhip, eſpecially, if it croſſes our eaſe, or our profit, as this did, is uſually diſtaſted) yet, being awed with the Majeſty of this great work, they durſt not oppoſe, or reſiſt it openly; but ſecretly they malign it, and they deſire to
D ſee Chriſt's Warrant, and Commiſſion, and call for a Sign, and Miracle to Authorize it. They diſcover their old, inveterate diſeaſe of Infidelity; nothing is well done with them without a Miracle. Saint *Paul* tells us of this humour of theirs, 1 *Cor.* i. 22. *The Jews require a Sign.* Why, what needs a Sign?

Firſt, The work ſpeaks for it ſelf; ſuch ſhamefull abuſe of God's Houſe, whoſe heart could endure it, that hath any zeal for God?

Secondly, How many Prophets have they had, that came to reform them, and yet wrought no Miracle?

Thirdly, The work it ſelf was a wonderfull Miracle; that one mean,
E contemptible man, in outward appearance, by himſelf alone, without any aſſiſtance, ſhould affright, and drive away ſo great a multitude, and none dare to gain-ſay him? St. *Hierom* ſaith, "'Tis one of the greateſt "Miracles that Chriſt wrought in all the Goſpel, this caſting out of "Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple. Yet ſee, theſe obſtinate *Jews* muſt have another Miracle to make this good; and accordingly, Chriſt returns them this anſwer, aſſures them of this Sign, and Wonder: *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raiſe it up.*

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And this Anſwer which he gives, this Sign he foretells them of, 'tis many wayes conſiderable. A

I. 'Tis *Reſponſum obſcurum*; a ſign very darkly, and obſcurely propounded to them. He ſpeaks of his Death, and Reſurrection; but not clearly, and plainly; but wraps up his meaning in much obſcurity. Not, that our Saviour meant to deceive them with an Æquivocation; as the Maſters of that Lying Art do profanely affirm. One of themſelves, Cardinal *Tolet*, frees this Speech from that lewd imputation. He ſuppoſes, that Chriſt, by ſome geſture, pointed to himſelf; not to the material Temple. But yet the ſpeech had it's obſcurity.

1. It was the Oeconomy and diſpenſation, which Chriſt obſerved B in making known theſe Myſteries concerning himſelf. He did it with ſome reſervedneſs, and touch of obſcurity, as moſt conducing to his great work of our Redemption by his Death and Paſſion. When he had drawn from Saint *Peter* that noble Confeſſion, that he *was the Chriſt*, Matth. xvi. 16. he charged his Diſciples, *that they ſhould tell no man, he was Jeſus the Chriſt*, Verſe 20. Had the carnal *Jews* been perſwaded of that, they would have expected a temporal Kingdom, which would have been contrary to his Death and Paſſion. It was Saint *Peter*'s Errour; he confeſſes our Saviour to be *the Chriſt*; and therefore he thinks, he muſt not ſuffer death; *O, Maſter, farr be it from thee.* But then, C

2. The obſcurity of this Anſwer was *in pœnam infidelitatis*, as a juſt puniſhment for their Unbelief. 'Tis the reward of an unbelieving heart, of a quarrelling, and gain-ſaying, and contradicting ſpirit; either God will not anſwer their cavelling Queſtions; or, if he anſwers them, they ſhall not underſtand him. An humble, and a teachable Spirit ſhall receive inſtruction; but an unbelieving heart ſhall be left in blindneſs. The Oracles of Religion ſhall be Riddles to them. Thus Chriſt ſhews the different wayes of expreſsing himſelf, *Matth.* xiii. The Apoſtles ask him: *Why he ſpake to the Jews in Parables?* D *Becauſe*, ſaith he, *'tis given to you to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; but to them 'tis not given: They, ſeeing, ſee not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they underſtand.* O, take heed of a cavelling ſpirit in matters of God; they that will not believe, ſhall not underſtand; the Goſpel, that is all light to the Saints, is all darkneſs to them. As that Pillar in the wilderneſs, 'twas light to the *Iſraelites*; but to the *Egyptians*, darkneſs. That's the firſt, *Reſponſum obſcurum.* This anſwer of Chriſt,

II. 'Twas *Reſponſum dilatorium*, a dilatory Anſwer: the Promiſe of a ſign, not forthwith to be fulfilled, but to be done hereafter. E

1. 'Tis not unuſual with God to referr the faith of his people to ſigns and tokens, that are afterwards to be performed. Such a ſign he gave to *Moſes*, Exod. iii. 12. *This ſhall be a token unto thee, when thou haſt brought forth the people out of Egypt, you ſhall ſerve God upon this Mountain.* Such a ſign he gave to *Ahaz*; ſuch a ſign to *Hezekiah*, that he ſhould be delivered from the Hoſt of the *Aſſyrians*: He

will

A will make good his preſent promiſes by after-ſeals, and confirmations to come.

2. He referrs them to his Reſurrection, as to the great ſign and teſtimony concerning himſelf. His other Miracles, they were but preparative ſigns, in reſpect of this, to make them liſten to his Doctrine: but his Reſurrection, that was the grand Sign, that he was the Mediatour, and Redeemer. *God, having raiſed up his Son, ſent him to bleſs you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities*, Acts iii. 26. Till then, Chriſt was more ſparing of his miraculous manifeſtations of himſelf. His Transfiguration he commands his Diſciples to tell no
B man of, till after his Reſurrection. Before that, in his life-time, he wrought but few Converſions; but after his Reſurrection, then multitudes were ſaved. *Except the Wheat-corn fall into the ground, and die, it abides alone: but, if it die, it brings forth much fruit*, John xii. 24. *If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me*, Verſe 32. He referrs himſelf to that time. *When you have lifted up the Son of man, then ye ſhall know, that I am he*, John viii. 28. The *Centurion* could gueſs at his Deity, not only through his Humanity, but alſo through his miſery, and mortality; *Surely, this man was the Son of God:* but his Reſurrection, that publickly proclaimed him to be the
C Son of God. An oppreſſed, and ſuffering King is to be acknowledged a King; much more a victorious, and triumphant King. *He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the reſurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. Chriſt pitches upon this ſign, rather than upon a ſign from Heaven. The ſign of the Prophet *Jonas*, none like to that. *As Jonas was three nights, and three days, in the Whale's belly; ſo ſhall the Son of man be.— Let one riſe from the dead*, ſaith *Dives*, *and they will believe*. See, Chriſt is riſen from the dead. His Reſurrection, 'tis Faith's great Confirmation.

III. His Reſurrection, 'twas *ſignum confundens*; 'twas a ſign to
D the *Jews* of greateſt conviction, and confuſion. They feared this ſign above all; they took notice of it, and laid it up againſt a rainy day; as malice never wants memory. When Chriſt ſpake plainly to his Diſciples of his Reſurrection, they knew not *what the riſing from the dead ſhould mean*, Mark ix. 10. And when they were told *he was riſen*, it ſeemed a Fable to them, they *believed it not*, Luke xxiv. 11. But his Enemies could talk of it, and upbraid him with it, and laboured by all means to hinder it. "*Sir*, ſay they to *Pilat*, *this deceiver ſaid*, "*he would riſe again the third day:* if that ſhould prove ſo, we "were all undone, *the laſt error would be worſe than the firſt*. When
E they had him in his grave, they would make ſure to prevent it; as *Joſeph*'s Brethren, "Let's make him away, and ſee what will *come* "*of his dreams*. Afterwards, when they ſaw *Joſeph* advanced to all that glory, how were they abaſhed? To have crucified, dead, and buried *Jeſus* riſe again, to break thorow all their lets, and hinderances, 'tis a confounding ſign to thoſe unbelieving *Jews*. When they had impriſoned the Apoſtles, and made them ſure, and yet the next day,

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day, found them in the Temple, they were all dismayed at it, *Acts* v. It amaz'd them to hear, *The men, whom ye put in prison, are standing in the Temple.* How much more were they confounded in themselves to finde him raised up in glory, whom the other day they buried in ignominy? In his Passion he confuted them by those glimpses of glory, that even then appeared in him; but, in his Resurrection, he confounded them. In his Passion, they fell upon this stone, and were sore bruised by falling on him; but, in his Resurrection, this stone fell upon them, and ground them all to powder.

That's the first Consideration of the Words, as they stand in relation to the *Jews* Question.

Secondly, Let's consider the Words absolutely in themselves. And out of them three things offer themselves to our consideration.

First, Is the State and Dignity of Christ's holy Body, and Humanity; 'tis a Temple.

Secondly, Is the Violence, and Indignity, that was offered to it, at his Death, and Pasion; 'twas *solutum*. This Temple, 'twas pulled down, and destroyed.

Thirdly, Is the Repairing, and Restauration, and raising-up of this Temple, out of the ruins of it, by his Resurrection; that's in these words, *I will raise it up in three dayes.*

And these three Particulars present unto us three great Mysteries of our Christian Faith.

First, Here is the Mystery of our Saviour's Incarnation, by his assuming to himself the Nature of man. He made it a Temple.

Secondly, Here is the Mystery of his Cross, and Passion; this Temple was destroyed.

Thirdly, Here is the Mystery of his glorious Resurrection; He re-edified, and raised up this ruined Temple in three days.

First, Here is *Solomon*'s Temple; nay, here is a greater than *Solomon*'s, and a more holy Temple, the Temple of Christ's Body.

Secondly, Here is *Nebuchadnezzar*'s destroying the Temple; nay, a greater destruction: the fabrick of Christ's holy Temple is here ruined and destroyed.

Thirdly, Here is *Zerubbabel*'s repair of the Temple; nay, a greater than *Zerubbabel*'s, and a more glorious restauration in this raising it up in three dayes. The

First thing considerable is the State of Christ's Body, and Humanity, 'tis a Temple. Saint *John* expounds our Saviour's speech so; *Vers.* 21. *He spake of the Temple of his Body.* And Christ's Body was in a special, and peculiar manner, a Temple. Indeed, the bodies of the Saints have this honourable Title ascribed to them; and the Church of God, the body of Christians, that holy fellowship, and society of Saints, that's God's Temple likewise.

I. The Bodies of God's Saints are called Temples: they are made after the similitude of a Temple, 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. *Know ye not, that ye are the Temple of God?* And again, 1 *Cor.* vi. 19. *Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost?* II. The

A II. The Church and People of God, the Company and Congregation of Chriſtians, that's a Temple too. Thus St. *Paul* tells the Church of *Corinth*; (2 *Cor.* vi. 16.) *Ye are the Temple of the living God; God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* Thus St. *John* calls the Church, *the Tabernacle of God*; *Behold*, ſaith he, *the Tabernacle of God is amongſt men*; Rev. xxi. 3. And St. *Peter* ſhews us the manner, and materials of this holy Fabrick, 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. *Ye, as lively Stones, are built up a ſpiritual houſe.* Every Chriſtian is a precious Stone to make up this Building.

B But Chriſt in a more eminent manner is called *a Temple.* Chriſtians are Temples, and Houſes of God; becauſe God dwells in them by communication of Grace; the Holy Ghoſt takes poſſeſſion of them, by inſpiring, and working in them thoſe gracious and heavenly qualities, and endowments, by which they are ſanctified. But Chriſt's Humanity is God's Temple, by a ſubſtantial inhabitation. The God-head, and Divinity of Chriſt dwells in his Humanity immediately, and perſonally, not only by the infuſion of grace, and holy inſpiration. Thus *Paul* expreſſes it, *Coloſſ.* ii. 9. *In him dwells all the fulneſs of the God-head bodily*; that is, really, fully, ſubſtantially, by the neareſt union, as the Soul dwells in the body by an intimate conjunction. God dwells in his C Church, as a King dwells in his Kingdom, amongſt all his Subjects, by the gracious influence of his Regal Authority; but he dwells in Chriſts humanity, as a King in his Royal Palace, by his perſonal reſidence. He dwells in his Church, as the Sun is preſent in the air by influence, and ſhedding forth into it his Beams of light: but he dwells in Chriſt, as the Sun doth in the Heaven; *There is a Tabernacle for the Sun in the heavens*; by a bodily union.

More particularly, Chriſts Humanity repreſents God's Temple; his holy Body was the true Antitype of the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, and prefigured by it. The Apoſtle in the Ninth to the *Hebrews*, makes D Chriſt to be the Myſtery that was ſhadowed forth by that material Tabernacle, and outward Sanctuary. And the ſimilitude, and agreement of theſe two, will appear in theſe reſemblances.

1. They were both alike in the Building; both by God's immediate, and ſpecial direction. For the Tabernacle, God himſelf gave the pattern, and model of it to *Moſes*; and the Temple afterwards, the line and level by which it was faſhioned, was the *Spirit of Prophecy*. *David* and *Nathan*, they caſt the frame of it by ſpecial Inſpiration; and ſurely, ſo was the Temple of Chriſt's holy Body built, and contrived. The Holy Ghoſt was the Work-man. He inſpired *Bezaleel* E and *Hiram*, to build the Tabernacle and Temple; and 'twas his overſhadowing of the bleſſed Virgin, that framed, and faſhioned this bleſſed Edifice. He ordered every Particular, Time, and Place, and Perſon; the whole frame of this ſacred pile of Chriſt's Body was from the Holy Ghoſt. 'Tis eminently true of him, He was born *not of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God*, John i. 13.

2. Chriſt's holy Body was like that goodly Temple in the Ornaments,

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ments, that did beautifie it. That Temple was overlaid with Gold; and the Temple of Christ's Humanity was richly furnished, and adorned with that which was more precious than the gold of *Ophir*, the glorious endowments of all heavenly graces. And Grace, 'tis of more value, than the wedge of gold. And those graces in Christ were in the fullest manner, in the highest perfection: Not as grace is in us, thin-laid on, like your leaf-gold; but massie, and substantial, the perfection of all grace did enrich his Soul.

And as all the Ornaments, so those sacred Vessels of the Temple, those mysterious Utensils, with which it was furnished, are all fulfilled and accomplished in him. In Christ was the true Propitiatory, and Mercy-seat; in him were the Tables of the Law, the full knowledg of them, and the exact performance of them; in him was that *Pot of Manna*, that *food of Angels*, that *Bread of life, which came down from heaven*; in him was *Aaron's Rod*, with *ripe Almonds*, the Seal of his High-Priesthood, not fading, but flourishing, and for ever continuing.

3. Christ's holy Body was like that sacred Temple, in those religious Services, which were performed, and accomplished in that holy Place. All the Offices, and Functions of the Temple, are fulfilled in Christ.

(1.) In the Temple there was a standing and constant Oracle, from whence the People of God received all their Directions. From *between the Cherubims* God uttered his voice, and acquainted them with his Counsels upon all occasions. Answerably; in Christ's Humanity dwelt the true, and lively Oracle of heaven. He is the great *Counsellour* of his Church, *Esai.* ix. 6. The Oracle of Wisdom; *All the treasures of Wisdom, and Knowledg are in him*, Coloss. ii. 3. He *makes us wise to salvation.*

(2.) In the Temple was the Altar of Sacrifice for Expiation. The Atonement for sin was in the Temple. And that sacred Mystery was abundantly fulfilled in this Temple of Christ. In his Humanity was offered up the great propitiation for the whole world. *His own self bare our sins in his own Body on the Tree*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. *By his own blood he entred into the holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us*, Hebr. ix. 12. *Verè Templum Dei, corpus Christi, in quo nostrorum purificatio peccatorum.* Ambros.

(3.) The Temple, that was the House of Prayer. In it, or towards it, all Prayers were to be made; there was the Altar of Incense, that perfumed their Prayers. And Christ fully answers this Duty of the Temple.

1. His own personal Prayers in the dayes of his Flesh, how did they ascend like pillars of Perfume into the nostrils of God? He sent up strong prayers and supplications. And then,

2. For our Prayers; they must all be made in, or towards this Temple, or they finde no acceptance. His Spirit must inspire them, his Name must authorize them, his Merit must perfume them, his Intercession must recommend them to God's acceptation. Prayer stretches

A ſtretches out its hand to Chriſt, as the *Jews* towards their Temple: *Hear thou that dwelleſt between the Cherubims.* Our Faith muſt look upon him as the only *Crucifix*, to quicken our Devotion. That's the *Firſt*, he is *Templum.* Now follows,

Secondly, The Indignity that was offered to this Temple, it was deſtroyed. And the Alluſion holds good in this particular, betwixt Chriſt's holy Body, and the *Jews* Temple. That material Temple was pulled down, and defaced, and all the beauty of it layd in the duſt, and Chriſt's holy Body met with the like uſage. *Deſtruunt veritatem, ut conſervent umbram.* The *Jews*, zealous forſooth, of the other Temple,
B were moſt malicious againſt the Temple of Chriſt's Body: as faſt as they cryed up the one, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, Jerem. vii. 4. ſo faſt they cryed down the other, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*; *Down with it even to the ground.* And ſo we are now to come to his Death and Paſſion, expreſſed in this word, *Solvite*, or *Deſtruite*, Undo, or Deſtroy. And it ſhews the death and ſuffering of our Saviour in theſe particulars.

I. It ſhews the Nature of his Paſsion; it was a Diſſolution, a full, compleat death and deſtruction. Indeed, Death, 'tis called *a diſſolution*, and ſo was his; a ſundering and ſevering of all the parts of this holy
C Fabrick. Death, 'tis a parting of ſoul and body. Thus *Paul* expreſſes it, *Philip.* i. 23. *I deſire to be diſſolved*: and 2 *Cor.* v. 1. *When the earthly houſe of our Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved.* Death is a diſſolution, not an extinction, or annihilation: it ſevers ſoul from body, but doth not utterly aboliſh them: like an houſe pulled down, but the materials laid up, not waſted and conſumed. The ſoul returns to God, that gave it; and the body, that's reſerved to its proper receptacle. Chriſt's ſoul that was in Paradiſe, and his body likewiſe was in its Paradiſe, in *Joſeph*'s Garden, where he made his Sepulchre.

II. His Death, 'tis a diſſolution of the Temple: it reached no
D further than to his Humanity, there's the Extenſion of it. Death did part his ſoul from his body, and that was all. But there was a cloſe union, which no violence of Death could diſſolve, the union of his God-head with his Man-hood. That was an union uncapable of diſſolution or deſtruction. His Incarnation admits of no diſſolution: his Deity was united to his ſoul and body, when by death they were parted from themſelves. His ſoul departed, that was the ſoul of the Son of God; his body interred in the grave, it was the body of the Son of God. *Quod ſemel aſſumpſit, nunquam depoſuit.* His God-head ſupported his Soul in *triduo mortis*, and embalmed his body when it lay in the grave;
E as a man, drawing a Sword out of the Scabbard, holds the Sword in one hand, and the Scabbard in the other; they are aſunder in themſelves, but both are held, and ſupported by the ſame man.

III. *Diſſolvite*, *Deſtroy this Temple*; they were to doe it: It ſhews us the kinde, and manner of his death, it was to be violent. Chriſt's death was not to be a natural death, but violent and enforced. St. *Paul* calls it not θάνατος, but νέκρωσις, not a *dying*, but a *ſlaying*;

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2 Cor. iv. 10. This Temple of Christ's body dropt not down of it self by the decays of Nature; but violent hands of wicked men defaced it, and pulled it down. Christ's death was to be a sacrifice; and they were not to bring to God's Altar, that which was sick, or dyed of it self; the sacrifice was to be slain, and violently destroyed: So was our Saviour delivered into the hands of wicked men; he dyed in the fashion of a Malefactor; he was slain by the Law, wickedly, if ye respect men; but upon God's gracious design, he suffered death in the place, and stead of us, as our surety, and ransom.

IV. *Destroy it*; it sounds like a Concession, but it amounts to no more than a voluntary Permission. *Destroy* it; 'Tis not a word of command, but of free sufferance, and permission; not as the false witnesses deposed, *Thou, that destroyest the Temple of God, and buildest it up in three dayes*; No, Christ was no destroyer of Temples. 'Tis but a speech of permission: and that not *permissio juris*, a grant of Allowance, as if he had given them good leave to do it, and so they might do it lawfully; nor was it *permissio impunitatis*, a permission of Connivence, to do it upon promise of impunity. No, let these, and such as these destroyers, be sure God will reckon with them for it: but 'tis *permissio facti*, a sufferance of the fact only. He will not hinder them from doing it, nor restrain their violence and malice in acting of it. And that's all that wicked destroyers can say for themselves, God permits them to prosper in their wicked designs; well, that will breed them but cold comfort at the day of reckoning.

And, as it was a Permission, so 'tis a voluntary permission; otherwise Christ would have avoided it. He, that drove out the profaners of his other Temple, could as easily have driven back the destroyers of this Temple. Christ assures us of this; no man could take away his life against his will. He *had power to lay it down*. Till his hour came, he disappointed all their attempts; when his hour was come, he puts himself into their hands, yielded to their fury, submitted to his death. Otherwise, all the Angels of heaven would have come to rescue him. It sets out his Charity, thus to be willing to die for us; it makes his death meritorious, and of high price with God, to die in Charity to us, in Obedience to his Father, in Patience and pity to his Tormentors. He was not like the Ram catcht in the briars, and seized upon for a Sacrifice; but like obedient *Isaac*, bearing the wood of his Sacrifice, not struggling, or resisting.

V. It shews the Extremity of his death; *Destroy this Temple:* and so they did with all rage, and cruelty; they did not take down this Temple, but threw it down, as *David* describes the defacing of the material Temple, *they brake it down with axes and hammers*, Psal. lxxiv. 6. *Jonas* (the Type of his Death and Resurrection) found farr better usage than Christ did; the Mariners that flung him overboard, did it unwillingly, and with much reluctance: but our Destroyers here used all kinde of cruelty; they put him to a shamefull, a painfull, a tormenting death. We read in the Story of his Passion, of Whips,

A Whips, and Thorns, and Nails, and Spears, the Inſtruments of cruelty were uſed about him. *They pierced his Hands, and his Feet, they might tell all his bones*, they rack'd him ſo upon the Croſs. Wofull was the ſpectacle of this glorious Temple; the pillars of it wept like the Marble, the beams of it bled like the Vine, ſtreams of Blood flowed from this Sanctuary, like *Ezekiel's* Waters from the material Sanctuary.

We have ſeen the Ruin and deſtruction of this Temple; Come we now,

Thirdly, To the Repairing and Re-edifying of it in his glorious
B Reſurrection; *I will raiſe it up in three dayes.* I, here is the triumph of Chriſt over their malice. The more malicious they were in his deſtruction, the more glorious doth he appear in his Reſurrection. Thus, *The rage of men ſhall turn to thy praiſe.* Let them binde him with theſe cords of death, as they did *Sampſon* with their ſtrong bonds; ſee how eaſily he ſnaps them aſunder. He died as a Lamb; but he aroſe as a Lyon; This *David* prophecyed of, *Pſal.* xvi. 9, 10. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoyceth; becauſe thou wilt not leave thine Holy One to ſee corruption.*

Look to the Particulars, *Excitabo*:

C I. Here is the Agent, and Author of it, *I.*

II. Here is the ſubject Matter to be wrought upon, *It.*

III. Here is the State of Recovery, *I will raiſe it.*

IV. Here is the Set time prefix'd. *In three dayes.*

I. Here is the Agent, and Authour, *I.* He himſelf will raiſe this Temple, revive his own body, not another ſhall do it for him. To raiſe a dead man to life, is a ſtrange work, unheard of in all the whole compaſs of Nature. Pull down Temples we may, and build them up again; but who ever raiſed a dead man after his diſſolution? But yet 'tis much more for a dead man, to raiſe himſelf. The
D Scripture tells us of dead men raiſed by others; but none, but Chriſt, ever raiſed himſelf. It clearly ſhews us, that Chriſt was more than man: It was in the power of his God-head to raiſe himſelf out of the Grave. *He had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it up again*, John x. 18. This is the Prerogative of Chriſt: He hath Life in himſelf; *He is the reſurrection and the life*, John xi. 25. *a quickning Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. As the Sun in the Firmament ſets off it ſelf, and riſes of it ſelf, *rejoyces as a Giant to run his courſe.* The *Jews* cannot ſay, *He raiſed others from the dead, himſelf he cannot raiſe.*

II. See here the ſubject matter, 'tis *It*; the ſelf-ſame Temple:
E 'tis τοῦτον, though not τοῦτο. He doth not ſay, *Pull down this Temple, and I will build another*; but *I will rear up the ſame again.* Hew down the Pillars, ſcatter the Stones, I will put them together again. Not a Pin, or a Peg of this Temple ſhall be miſſing. Indeed, this is properly a Reſurrection, when the ſame thing that fell, is ſet up again, not another in the ſtead of it. Otherwiſe, the aſſuming of a new body had been another Incarnation, not a Reſurrection. That body,

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which was a Temple for God's grace to dwell in, that ſame body muſt be the Temple, and habitation of his glory: That body, the ſanctified inſtrument of ſo many good works, the ſame body muſt be raiſed into the fellowſhip of reward: That body, that ſuffered thoſe pains, and tortures, muſt be repaired with beauty and glory: That body, that was pierced and wounded, that ſame *thuribulum perforatum*, muſt appear before God in heaven, repreſenting the glorious price of our Redemption. A

III. See the ſtate and pitch of this Recovery, it ſhall be *raiſed up*. 'Tis not a partial repair; but a compleat and perfect one. *Zerubbabel* ſhall lay the foundation of this Temple, and his hands ſhall finiſh it. B

1. It was a ſubſtantial Repair. *See me*, ſaith our Saviour, after his Reſurrection; nay, *feel, and handle me*, you ſhall finde no imaginary and phantaſtical, but a real, ſubſtantial Body.

2. It was an entire Repair, nothing wanting to the perfection of it. They raiſed *Solomon*'s Temple after the deſtruction; but the Cherubims, and the Ark, and other precious parcels could never be renewed. Here is all Chriſt, no excellency is wanting in him.

3. It is a glorious Repair; not like *Zerubbabel*'s Temple, they wept to ſee it come ſo far ſhort of the former Temple. Nay, verily, the glory of this Temple of Chriſt's Body doth far exceed its former glory. *It was ſown in weakneſs, but raiſed in power, cloathed with immortality, impaſſibility:* infinite beauty and glory are the fruits and accompliſhments of his Reſurrection. *When ſhall he die, and his name periſh?* ſay his Enemies in the *Pſalm*. Whereas, after his death, he and his Name is much more glorious. *He hath now a Name above every name.* C

IV. He pitches them a certain time, and that a very ſhort and ſpeedy one, *Within three dayes*. They ſhall ſoon ſee how vain all their attempts and practices againſt him will prove. He doth not like that grand Impoſtour, *Mahomet*, that ſet ſo many hundreds of years for his return to his ſeduced Miſcreants, and tires out their expectation with his delayes: Or, as the *Jews*, who to excuſe the abſence of their long-looked for *Meſſias*, miſ-interpret thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, *They ſlander the footſteps of God's anointed*; applying it to them that ſay, *Their Meſſias is very ſlow-paced in his coming to them.* No, here is a ſhort, compendious time; and they ſhall finde his Reſurrection accompliſhed. He prefixes the ſpace of three dayes; D

1. It is for more Infallibility and Certainty. He foretells punctual circumſtances of time, and place, and acurately fulfills it. He had ſet a certain time for bringing his People out of the *Egyptian* bondage, and the ſelf-ſame day he wrought their deliverance. E

2. This ſpace of three dayes is ſet, to ſhew the Speedineſs of his Reſurrection; ſooner he could not well be conceived to be dead and buryed, and paſt all hope, as his Enemies would have it.

3. The ſhortneſs of the time ſhews *facilitatem Operis*, the wonderfull Eaſe, and Facility, he uſed in this great work of raiſing himſelf.

Three

A *Three dayes* are as much as *three thouſand* to Omnipotency. Eſpecially he takes a ſhort time, for raiſing, and building up again. Men can pull down apace, but they are not ſo ſpeedy in ſetting up any good. *On the contrary,* ſaith *Chryſoſtom, God was but ſix dayes in making the whole World; and yet he took ſeven dayes in deſtroying of Jericho.*

Within three dayes he roſe again. Yea, it was ſo ſpeedy, and quick, that pieces of dayes are reckoned for whole ones. *Ultima pars primæ, & prima pars ultimæ diei.* That's a ſign of great power; *Maximum opus minimo tempore conficere.* To do a great work in a little time, argues great Power. *Chriſtus de ſepulchro, tanquam de lecto ſurrexit;*
B Auguſt. *I laid me down, and ſlept, and roſe again.* Who ever awaked out of ſleep more eaſily? Nature muſt move by length and leiſure, *according to the time of life*; as the Scripture ſpeaks: *ſed neſcit tarda molimina virtus Spiritûs Sancti.* God can effect great things eaſily.

We will cloſe up all with a double Application:

Firſt, More particular, for every man to himſelf.

Secondly, More common and general, to the whole Church of God.

Firſt, This *Text* is applicable to our ſelves in each particular of it.

Firſt, Is Chriſt's Body a *Temple*? So ſhould ours be too; *Temples* and *houſes* for God to dwell in. Saint *Paul* catechizes the *Corinthians*
C in this Truth, with a check to thoſe that are ignorant of it, or never conſider it; *What? Know ye not, that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt?* 1 Cor. vi. 19. If you underſtand not this, you neither know God, nor your ſelves, nor the condition of a Chriſtian.

And to the being of a Temple, three things are required:

1. There is required an Appropriation, and Dedication of that, which muſt be a Temple, to God's ſervice and honour. A Temple belongs only to the true and living God. No creature is capable of the honour to have a Temple built to it; Temples, and Altars, and Sacrifices are Prerogatives belonging to God only. " No man, ſaith *Au-*
D " *guſtine,* erects a Temple to any, *niſi quem, aut credidit, aut putavit,* " *aut finxit Deum*; unleſs he thought him, or imagined him to be a " God. Are our ſouls, and bodies Temples? then they muſt be appropriated to this high ſervice of honouring and worſhipping of God. Our bodies are framed, not like ſome *Abſalom*'s Pillar, for ſhew, or oſtentation; but like *Jacob*'s Pillar, *Gen.* xxviii. 22. *This Pillar* (ſaith *Jacob*) *that I have ſet up, ſhall be God's Houſe,* the place of his Honour, the Houſe of his Worſhip. 'Tis a debauching of our Nature, a fruſtrating of our End, a defrauding of our God, to conceit our ſelves made for other ends and employments than the ſervice of God.

E 2. To the being of a Temple, beſides the Dedication, there is required an actual Conſecration. *Solomon* did dedicate the Temple, when he undertook the building of it; but, when it was built, he after made a ſolemn and religious Conſecration of it. Conſecration gives God *Livery,* and *Seiſin,* and actual poſſeſſion of us. What is our Baptiſm, but the hallowing, and conſecrating of our ſouls and bodies to the ſervice of God? As the Tabernacle was conſecrated by the ſprinkling of

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of blood; ſo are our ſouls and bodies, by that holy ſprinkling ſanctified, and ſet apart, to be God's Houſes and Temples. By that myſtical Conſecration, we invite him to enter in, and to dwell in us: *Ariſe thou, Lord, into thy reſting-place; thou, and the Ark of thy ſtrength*; "Say of my ſoul and body, *Here will I dwell, for I have* "*a delight in it.*

3. Are our Bodies dedicated and conſecrated to be Temples to God? Let them then be Temples to God by actual employment of them, as his Temples. Let his worſhip be there conſtantly maintained. Be carefull, that thy Morning and Evening Sacrifices of Prayer, be duly performed. Let his Word dwell plenteouſly in thee. Thy ſoul muſt be *Arca Teſtamenti*; as the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up and preſerved. Above all, be ſure, thou do not profane the Temple of God; make not God's Temple an ordinary houſe, all for ſecular employments; turn it not into ſhops, or warehouſes. We cry ſhame! to ſee a Church turned into a Barn or Stable; to ſee a Chriſtian all for the World, is no better ſight: much leſs, make not this Houſe of God, a Den of thieves, a Brothel-houſe of uncleanneſs, an Hog-ſty for worldly and ſenſual pleaſures, a Cage for unclean Birds. Thus *Auguſtine* debates this point with profane men; "Say "not, thy body, 'tis but duſt and aſhes; no matter how thou uſeſt it; "No, (*ſaith he*) our bodies are Members of Chriſt, Temples of the "Holy Ghoſt; *Quid horum in te contemnis? Chriſtum, cujus membrum* "*es*; *an Spiritum ſanctum, cujus templum es?* What (*ſaith he*) deſpiſe you? Chriſt, whoſe Member thou art; or the Holy Ghoſt, "whoſe Temple thou art?

Secondly, As our Bodies are Temples, which is their Dignity; ſo we muſt look for a diſſolution of them, which is our Frailty. Death will down with them all. All theſe houſes of God muſt one day be battered down; they muſt all be brought to the duſt of Death. 'Twas Saint *Auguſtine*'s Meditation a little before his death, *Cadunt ligna, & lapides, & moriuntur mortales*; Timber and Stones will decay, and come to ruin, and mortal men muſt ſubmit to mortality. Indeed, as our bodies are Temples, for their uſe; ſo they are but Tabernacles, for their ſtrength and conſiſtence. Saint *Paul*, and Saint *Peter* calls them but Tabernacles; and Tabernacles or Tents have but weak foundations, ſoon removed, eaſily pulled down. A Cake of Barley-bread tumbled down the Tent of the *Midianites*, and overturned it, that it lay all along, *Judg.* vii. 13. Leſs than ſo, even a crumb of bread may deſtroy the Tent, and Tabernacle of our bodies, and ſo lay them in the duſt.

Thirdly, But then, here is our comfort; theſe Temples of ours ſhall be raiſed up again; 'Twill be a ruin of a few days; there will come a repair, and reſtauration. In death, ſaith Saint *Paul*, *Peregrinamur à corpore*, we are, by death, *Pilgrims from our body*; and what ſaith *Tertullian*? *Qui peregrinatur, revertetur in domicilium*; A Traveller means to return again to his houſe and abode. The Holy Ghoſt muſt

A must have his Temple reſtored to him. Chriſt's Reſurrection ſhall work our Reſurrection; *Becauſe I live, you ſhall live alſo*, John xiv. 19. *Reſurget in membris, qui reſurrexit in capite.* The Head is already raiſed, and that will raiſe up the whole body. This hope ſhould comfort us againſt the fear of death. *Sub tali ſpe, non debet eſſe triſte Templum Dei*, ſaith *Auguſtine*.

Secondly, For the Church of God, that hath its ſhare in this Application.

Firſt, 'Tis the Temple of God; the place where his honour dwells. All other Temples are Synagogues of Satan; but the Church, 'tis the
B Temple of the living God; and *I will dwell in them, and walk in them.* All other Temples are Temples of dead Idols; we are the Temple of the living God. Idols are ſet up in their Temples; but there they ſtand, and ſtir not; *they have feet, but they walk not*: But God dwells in his Church, and walks in it, viſits, and converſes with it.

Secondly, Then there is a Diſſolution and Ruin may befall the Temple. The Church of Chriſt hath enemies, that will put hard to it, to lay it as low as ever the Temple was, and ſet up the *Abomination of deſolation in the holy Place*: there may come a *Babyloniſh* captivity,
C and ruin of God's People.

Thirdly, But then here is our comfort, there will come a raiſing again of all theſe ruins. Let them do their worſt, when they think they have waſted all, yet what ſaith God? *Mine own will I bring again, as I did once from the depth of the Sea.* Though we be ſlain all the day long, yet *we ſhall be more than Conquerours.* The *Jews*, to preſerve their typical Temple, they deſtroy the true Temple; but what ſaith *Chryſoſtom? Not a ſtone was left upon a ſtone of their material Temple; but, for the ſpiritual Temple, that's built on a Rock, no prevailing againſt it.* *Pharaoh* could not hinder the encreaſe of the *Hebrews*, for all his Perſecutions. The Church ſhall have a Reſurrection
D out of all perſecutions. 'Tis that hope, with which the Prophet *Hoſea* comforts God's people in all their afflictions, and let it be our comfort; Chap. vi. 1, 2. *Come, and let us return unto the* LORD: *for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will binde us up: After two dayes will he revive us, in the third day he will raiſe us up, and we ſhall live in his ſight.*

E

ON EASTER-DAY,

The Fifth Sermon.

Sr. Mark xvi. 7.

But go your way, tell his Diſciples and Peter, that he goes before you into Galilee: there ſhall ye ſee him; as he ſaid unto you.

THE Text, 'tis the firſt joyful tidings that came to the Church of God, of our Saviour's Reſurrection; the firſt bleſſed news of Chriſt's Triumphant Victory over Death and the Grave, and thereby of his reſtoring of us to life and immortality. When the four Lepers found the Armies of the *Syrians*, the enemies of Gods people vanquiſhed, and fled, and chaſed away, 2 *King.* vii. and all their goods left to the ſpoil, they ſaid one to another, Verſ. 9. *This is a day of good tidings, come, that we may go tell the King's houſehold* of it. This day Satan and the Powers of Hell, all the enemies of our Salvation, were vanquiſhed and ſubdued by Chriſt's Reſurrection; the hold and fortreſs of Death, the Grave, was ſpoyled and ranſack'd, the gates and bars of Hell broken in pieces; Our *Sampſon* hath taken the gates of the *Philiſtines* on his ſhoulders, and carryed them away. Surely, this is a day of joyful tidings; let it be told to the King's houſehold, publiſhed in the Church of God; *Say unto Sion, behold, thy God reigneth*, he hath *triumphed glorioufly*, he hath *led Captivity captive*; the *horſe*, and the *rider*, that *pale horſe, and Death riding on him*, Rev. vi. 8. hath he ſlain in the battel.

You ſee the purpoſe of the Text, 'tis the happy tidings of our Saviour's Reſurrection. And in it take notice of theſe particulars;

Firſt, Is the preſent and ſpeedy Diſpatch of theſe Tidings, *But go your way.*

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Secondly, Is the Perſons, to whom theſe Tidings are directed, *Tell his Diſciples and Peter.*

Thirdly, Is the Sum of the Meſſage, the News to be imparted, *He goes before you into Galilee, there you ſhall ſee him.*

Fourthly, Is the Certainty, and Confirmation, and Aſſurance of it, *As he ſaid unto you.*

First, Is the Diſpatch of this Meſſage, and that ſeems very haſty, and ſomewhat abrupt: it begins here with a word of Diverſion, *But* Why ſo? Were they in the wrong way? or in an unwarrantable employment? Juſt now, in the former Verſe, he bids them, *Come and ſee the place, behold the Sepulchre, where the Lord was laid*, and from whence he was riſen: Why doth he now preſently remove them from it, not let them ſtay, and take their fill of that joyful Viſion? When this Grave received the dead body of Chriſt, they beheld it with ſorrow; now it hath yielded up the living body of Chriſt, pity it were, they were not ſuffered to behold it with joy. Beſides, that this diverſion gave a check to that over-humane, and paſſionate, and even ſuperſtitious affectation of viſiting the places of Chriſt's Birth, and Paſſion, and Reſurrection, which after-times accounted an high piece of Devotion. 'Tis ſaid of *Hilarion*, he went once to *Hieruſalem* to ſee thoſe Monuments of Chriſt's Death and Paſſion; but he went no more; he made no practice of it, placed no piety in it: So here, the Angel allows them a ſight of the Sepulchre to confirm their Faith; but withall he diſmiſſes them preſently, ſuffers them not to fix their devotion upon it. Beſides this Reaſon, the Angel is thus quick and ſpeedy in his diverſion, *But go your way*; to teach us, that even the ſpiritual delights of Contemplation muſt give way to religious and pious Actions. Their Piety in meditating on his Reſurrection, muſt give way to their Charity, in imparting it to others. Our Perſonal Devotion muſt yield to our Compaſſion; and what comforts we have taſted, we muſt not engroſs them to our ſelves, but communicate to others. The care that we muſt take of others afflictions, muſt make us abate even of our own conſolations. St. *Paul* can be content to *ſtay out of heaven*, to be ſerviceable to the Church, *Phil.* i. 23. He is the beſt ſervant, not that delights to ſtand in his Maſters preſence, but that carefully minds, and diligently goes about his Maſter's buſineſs. *If thou loveſt me, feed my ſheep. Probatio dilectionis eſt exhibitio operis.* St. *Paul* ſhews us the good uſe we muſt make of our comforts, 2 *Cor.* 1. 6. *God comforts us, that we may be able to comfort others by the comforts wherewith we our ſelves are comforted of God.*

For the Diſpatch of this Meſſage, here are two Things conſiderable.

The firſt is, *A quo*, From whom this Meſſage is ſent; that's an Angel. He himſelf was a Meſſenger poſted from heaven to acquaint the Church with this bleſſed news.

The ſecond is *Per quos*, By whom the Angel conveys this news; 'tis by thoſe holy, devout Women, that came to the Sepulchre, early in the morning.

First,

A *First*, The firſt thing conſiderable is, *A quo*, From whom it comes. The firſt news of Chriſt's Reſurrection is ſent by an Angel. Surely good news will finde welcom, let the Meſſenger be what he will be, though never ſo mean. The good tidings of eſcapal and freedom from enemies, was welcome News to *Samaria*, though four fold Lepers brought it to them. *How beautiful are the feet of thoſe, that bring glad tidings of good things?* Rom. x. 15. We would kiſs the very feet of a joyful Meſſenger. But yet we ſee this Meſſage is not poſted by an ordinary conveyance: but a choice Ambaſſadour, one of the moſt honourable Peers in the Court of heaven, a glorious Angel is em-
B ployed in the delivery of it; for divers congruities.

I. *Ob ſummam dignitatem.* It becomes the excellency of this great work of Chriſt's Reſurrection to be attended and publiſhed by the Miniſtery of Angels. 'Tis an high preferment even for the glorious Angels to celebrate this great Triumph of our bleſſed Saviour. No doubt, all the Angels in Heaven had an holy ambition to be employed about it, they wondered at the Glory of it. Thus the Fathers repreſent the heavenly Angels magnifying Chriſt at his Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, in *Eſai*'s Words, Chap. iii. 1. *Who is this that comes from Edom, with died Garments from Bozra? this, that is glorious in his ap-*
C *parel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, with his garments dipt in blood, mighty to ſave?*

The reviving of the Son of God out of his grave, theſe glad tidings, the greateſt Arch-angel is deſirous to publiſh it. *Joab* would not let *Ahimaaz* carry tidings into the City, becauſe the King's ſon was dead. This day the Son of God hath overcome death, and is revived. Indeed he was hung in a tree, and thruſt thorow with darts, and a heap of ſtones caſt upon him; but he is riſen and revived: the moſt glorious Angel deſires to report it. See how triumphantly the Angel appears, in his garments white as Snow, ſhining like the Sun, clad in his richeſt
D robes of glory. Indeed, all Creatures celebrate this joyful day. As at his Death and Paſſion there was a great Earthquake; the earth trembled for fear and horrour: ſo now, at his Reſurrection, there was again a great Earthquake. This laſt, 'twas not *motus tremoris*; but *exultationis*, a motion of exultation and gladneſs. *Tremble thou earth* for *horrour* at the *death* of thy *Lord: Leap, and skip, and dance for joy, O thou earth*; at thy *Lord's Reſurrection*.

II. Fit it was, an Angel ſhould firſt publiſh it, an heavenly Meſſenger, as being a matter ſupernatural and heavenly, and of ſpecial revelation. This Myſtery of Faith, 'tis not a point of humane diſcovery;
E but of Angelical revelation. All Proclamations are firſt publiſhed at the Court-gate; then ſent abroad into the Kingdom. This new revelation, 'tis firſt proclaimed at Heaven-gates by an Angel; and then ſent abroad unto the Sons of Men.

The whole Goſpel, 'tis not of man, no humane invention; nor by man, not found out, or diſcovered by man: but by ſupernatural revelation. The conception of Chriſt, the tidings of it was brought by an Angel;

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Luke i. 26. *The Angel Gabriel was ſent by God to the Virgin Mary.* His Birth, the tidings of that was brought into the world by an holy Angel: *Luke* ii. 9, 10. *The Angel of the Lord came upon them, I bring you tidings of great joy, to you is born a Saviour.* His Reſurrection here, firſt publiſhed by an Angel. His Aſcenſion into heaven, that's attended upon and celebrated by Angels, *Acts* i. 10. His ſecond coming, that ſhall be publiſhed with a great ſhout from heaven, and the voice of an Arch-Angel, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 16. All theſe lively Pearls of our Faith were firſt delivered to the Church, by the Diſpoſition of Angels. The Preface to St. *John*'s *Revelation* agrees to all theſe ſupernatural Truths: *I Jeſus have ſent, and ſignified by my Angel, to ſhew to his ſervants what ſhall come to paſs.* Take heed, we deſpiſe not theſe ſacred Truths, *Heb.* ii. 1. *We ought to give earneſt heed to the things, which we have heard; for the word ſpoken by Angels is ſtedfaſt, and every tranſgreſſion, and diſobedience ſhall receive a juſt recompenſe of reward,* verſ. 2.

III. Angels are made Meſſengers and Publiſhers of theſe tidings, and they gladly undertake it. See now there is a ſweet communion, and entercourſe 'twixt them and us. It ſhews us the virtue and power of that great attonement of Chriſt's Death and Blood-ſhed; it hath made up the breach and alienation 'twixt us and the Angels. Our breaking with God by ſin, and the loſs of his love, loſt us the communion and love of the Angels. They were all partakers in Gods quarrel; and therefore the Scripture preſents them in Martial, and Military, and Warlike appearances, tells us of Armies and Hoſts of Angels. *The Chariots of God are twenty thouſands, even thouſands of Angels, Miniſters of vengeance.* Now Chriſt hath appeaſed all, reduced all into amity. Before they appeared as Heralds of Armes in a military manner; now we enjoy a friendly entercourſe, *Epheſ.* ii. 6. Chriſt, *by his death hath ſlain hatred, he hath reconciled all things in heaven, and the things in earth,* Col. i. 2. that is, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, He hath made Men and Angels become friends again. Now we are no more *forreiners* or *ſtrangers*, but *fellow-citizens* with the *Angels.*

If *Abſolom* regains his Fathers favour, then *Joab* befriends him; but if he rebels againſt his Father, then *Joab* ſtabs him. Such dealing we may expect from the holy Angels. See this amity begun at Chriſt's birth, *Luke* ii. Then the Angels began to lay aſide all hoſtility. *There were with the Angels a multitude of heavenly Souldiers,* verſ. 13. And what was their Meſſage? *Glory to God, and peace on earth, and good-will to men.* When Souldiers and Martial men proclaim peace and good-will, there is peace indeed. This office of Love the Angel performs, 'tis the fruit of Chriſt's Mediation, the merit of his Death, the purchaſe of his Paſſion.

That's the firſt thing conſiderable in this Meſſage, *A quo*, From whom it was ſent, *Ab Angelo.*

Secondly, A ſecond thing conſiderable is, *Per quos*, By whom the Angel conveys this Meſſage; they are the Women that repaired to the

A the Sepulchre. Reaſon would conceit, that ſome other Meſſengers ſhould have been employed, then theſe poor weak Women. But *God's thoughts are not as Man's thoughts are.*

1. God purpoſely makes choice of ſuch Inſtruments in this great and weighty Service. In the whole carriage and Oeconomy of the Goſpel, God obſerves a mixture of much ſpiritual power and glory, with much outward baſeneſs and meanneſs. The Goſpel, 'tis called *a rich Treaſure in an earthen Veſſel*, 2 Cor. iv. 7. The Myſtery conveyed is rich, and precious; but the means of conveyance is poor, and contemptible. The whole Myſtery of Chriſt is made up of power and
B weakneſs. His Conception was by the holy Ghoſt, miraculouſly of a pure Virgin; but the outſide mean, his Mother but an earthen Veſſel, the ſpouſe of a poor Carpenter. His Birth made known and publiſhed by an Angel; there is the heavenly treaſure: but diſcovered not to the Great Ones of the world, but to poor Shepherds. His Lodging pointed out by a glorious Star; and yet his Cradle but a Cratch, his Nurſery but a Stable. Being in the Wilderneſs, he was attended by Angels: but ſee the poor outſide, he was amongſt the wilde Beaſts; *Mark* i. 13. In his Agony, he was full of trembling and horror; but then he was comforted from Heaven by an Angel. At his Death
C he was crucified with Theeves; but yet the powers of heaven and earth trembled at it. The Tidings of his Reſurrection firſt publiſhed by an Angel; but yet ſent into the world by poor weak Women. Still you ſee a ſtrange mixture of weakneſs and power. As it was with *Herod*, an Angel ſmote him, and yet Worms conſumed him. A Carnal eye ſaw nothing in Chriſt, but weakneſs and infirmity; but a Spiritual eye in all theſe paſſages beheld *his glory, as the glory of the only Son of God.* The Goſpel is ſo carryed by God, that Infidelity finds occaſion to ſtumble, and Faith a ſure foundation to ſtand.

II. The Tidings of his Reſurrection are conveyed into the world
D by weak Women. Had Fleſh and Blood the ordering of it, it ſhould have been firſt publiſhed to the Colledge of the Apoſtles: Or, if the Papiſts might have ruled it, *Peter* ſhould have had the firſt intelligence, and viſion of Angels directed to him. No, we ſee God inverts this order. In matters of Free Grace, and Supernatural Revelation, poor ſilly Women are preferred before the chief Apoſtles. What *Deborah* ſaid to *Barak*, may be ſaid to *Peter*, and his fellow-Apoſtles, *This day ſhall not be for thine honour, God will do it by the hands of a Woman.* Poor *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* may in this Caſe inſtruct *Apollos*. The Lord can chooſe poor and weak things, and make them outſtrip
E the moſt excellent and chiefeſt. "Kings and Princes, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, "make known their minds to inferiour people, by their great Officers "and Miniſters of State: God, he employs poor, feeble, contempti- "ble men, to declare his will to the Potentates of the World.

III. But yet there is ſome congruity, that God obſerves in the choice of theſe Meſſengers. Something there was, why firſt he imparts this Truth to the Women; then, by them, to the Apoſtles. Why ſo?

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ſo? Theſe good Women, they ſtood to it, and clave to Chriſt, when the Apoſtles, all of them fled and forſook him; they aſſiſted his Croſs, when the other hid themſelves, *Mark* xv. 40. They watched his Burial, repaired early and weeping to the Sepulchre; they were forwarder ſt in attending his Paſſion, and ſo they are firſt made acquainted with his Reſurrection. See *Peter* and the reſt, flee like fearful Women; but theſe holy Matrons, forſake him not: therefore they are made Apoſtles to them; *Go, tell his Diſciples and Peter, that he is riſen.* 'Tis a check to them, that they ſhould be thus out-ſtript by theſe poor Women. The News muſt come to them at the ſecond hand. *Peter*, like *Jonas*, lies aſleep under the Hatches, and muſt be awakened by theſe Women. They ſuffer weak ones to out-ſtrip them in their ſervices, and ſo come after them in their rewards and comforts. A B

The Second thing conſiderable, are the Perſons to whom theſe tidings are directed, *Tell his Diſciples and Peter.*

Firſt, Here is a general direction to his Diſciples.

Secondly, A ſpecial Charge to acquaint *Peter* with it by Name.

Firſt, To his Diſciples. But then we may ask St *Judas* Queſtion, *John* xiv. 22. *Why wilt thou manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not to the World?*

I. Why is not the Meſſage directed to *Pilate* and *Herod*, to *Annas*, and *Caiphas*, and the Prieſts that condemned him, and compaſſed his death? It might have been a mighty conviction to them. No, 'tis purpoſely hid from them to puniſh their Infidelity, and former Obſtinacy. They ſinned againſt knowledge, gain-ſaid his Miracles, blaſphemed his Doctrine, deſtroyed and crucified him; now they are given over to the hardneſs of their hearts. They had heard him preach in his life-time; now, ſhould he appear from the dead, they would not believe him. C

II. Why not to the common People, that ſinned out of ignorance? No, this manifeſtation of his Reſurrection was not made promiſcuouſly to all, purpoſely to prepare a way to Faith and Believing. The great honour that Chriſtianity doth to God, is to embrace his Truth upon belief. Chriſtians are not called *rationalis*, but *fideles*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. Faith, 'tis the homage of our underſtanding; it doth *inclinato capite adorare Deum.* And the great Myſtery, that Faith fixes upon, 'tis Chriſt's Reſurrection. St. *Paul* makes it the ſum of our Chriſtian Faith. *If thou ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed Chriſt from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved*, Rom. x. 9 Believe his Paſſion, yet if thou believe not his Reſurrection, *thy Faith is vain, thou art yet in thy ſins*, 1 Cor. xv. 17. St. *Peter* tells us of God's purpoſe in his diſpenſations, *Acts* x. 40. *Him God raiſed up the third day, and ſhewed him openly, not to all the people, but to Witneſſes choſen before God, even to us —— and commanded us to preach unto the people:* that ſo the bleſſing which Chriſt pronounces, may reſt upon the Church, *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed. Aliud eſt videndo credere*; that was *Thomas* his Faith, he muſt ſee D E

Chriſt

A Christ risen, e're he would believe it: *aliud credendo videre*, that's the right Faith, first to believe it, then to see it.

So then, this Message and Tidings of Christ's Resurrection is directed to his Disciples; and we may consider them in a threefold Notion.

1. It is sent to his Disciples, and they were *Ecclesia representativa*, they were the only visible body of Christians: to teach us, to whom the benefit of Christ's Resurrection belongeth; 'tis to the Church, 'tis limited, and confined only to believers. The Church, 'tis the price of his Blood, the inheritour of his Merits, the only partaker of his Resur-
B rection. The Passion and Resurrection of his Natural body was all, and only for his Mystical body. *For them he laid down his life, and for them he took it up again.* Be sure thou beest one of that holy Fraternity; sort thy self amongst his Disciples, or his Resurrection doth not belong to thee.

2. These tidings are sent *Discipulis dubitantibus, & incredulis*. The Faith of the Disciples was now in a great weakness, they had almost given over all belief, that Jesus was the Messias, *Luke* xxiv. 21. *We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel.* Now they were giving over that thought, their Faith lies languishing. Yet for
C all this great pang and fit of Infidelity, they are accounted Disciples; they are Christ's, for all this their weakness of Faith. Our Faith, not only when 'tis *in robore* in its full strength and vivacity; but when 'tis in *vulnere*, wounded, and weakened, and overwhelmed with temptations, is accepted of him. When Faith is so feeble, it cannot apprehend and lay hold on him; yet then he will graciously comprehend and lay hold on us. See now, their Faith is so weak, it cannot look out for it self, God sends helps and succours, to support and revive it. Christ's death, it brought a Winter upon their Faith, it is blasted and shaken; but Christ's Resurrection, like the Spring-tide, sends up the
D sap of Faith into their hearts again, revives it and makes it flourish again.

3. These Tidings are sent *Discipulis mœstis, & lugentibus*: These Disciples were at this time, full of sadness and sorrow, for the loss of their Master. The sorrows for his Death and Passion, did afflict and oppress them; See how speedily messages of Joy and Comfort are dispatcht unto them. Such Mourners are blessed Mourners, *They shall be comforted.* They that can lament for his Passion, they shall be partakers of the joy and comfort of his Resurrection. Hast thou lost the presence and spiritual comfort of thy Saviour? Is he become to thee
E as one dead and gone? mourn, and sorrow for this loss, and be sure thou shalt hear of him again with tidings of joy. *For a little time have I hid my self from thee, but with everlasting compassions will I embrace thee, saith the* LORD *thy Redeemer*, Esai liv. 7. *Dolores pœnitentis sunt dolores parturientis*, saith St. *Augustine*. The sorrows of a penitent soul mourning for the loss of Christ, they are like the pains of a Woman in travel, they shall end in joy.

We

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We come to the ſecond Direction: a ſpecial charge is given them,

Secondly, To acquaint *Peter* with theſe good Tidings, an expreſs Meſſage is directed to him. *Peter*, it ſeems, had ſome ſpecial concernment in this great work of Chriſt's Reſurrection. As the Title of the eighteenth Pſalm, *The* LORD *delivered him out of the hands of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. Saul* was more then an ordinary enemy, and ſo that deliverance was an extraordinary Work.

But then the Enquiry muſt be, Why *Peter* muſt have a more perſonal information of Chriſt's Reſurrection, than the other Diſciples? Sure, they had all a like common Intereſt in Chriſt's Reſurrection. St. *Peter* aſſures us, that Chriſtians have all alike ἰσότιμον πίστιν, *precious Faith* with him, 2 *Pet.* i. 2. St *Jude* calls it *a common ſalvation*, Ver 3. We have all a *Fellowſhip in this Goſpel*, Phil. i. 5. Why is this Meſſage ſent to *Peter* by Name?

The *Papiſts* would fain pick out St. *Peter*'s Prerogative, and Supremacy out of this ſpecial and perſonal Addreſs. Many ſuch Arguments they have. Chriſt preached out of *Peter*'s Ship: in that Ship he wrought the miraculous draught of Fiſhes: he paid Tribute for himſelf and *Peter*: theſe they boaſt of, as great ſignifications of *Peter*'s Supremacy: So this packet of News muſt be ſure to be delivered to *Peter*'s Hands, he is made of the Quorum; nothing muſt be done or ſaid, if *Peter* be not there. Nay, 'tis ſtrange, though the Scripture ſay, He appeared firſt to *Mary Magdalen*, yet they are ſo bold as to ſay, He appeared firſt unto *Peter*. But ſure St. *Peter* was now in no condition to dream of Supremacy, nor to challeng any other Primacy to himſelf, then that, which St. *Paul* elſewhere, not in pride, but in great humility, aſſumes to himſelf, that he was *primus peccatorum*, the *chief of ſinners*. And accordingly let us reſolve the purpoſe of this perſonal Meſſage to *Peter* into theſe intendments.

1. This Meſſage concerning our Saviour's Reſurrection is ſent to *Peter*, Petro *turpiſſimè lapſo*. *Peter* had fallen moſt fouly; denyed, forſworn his Maſter with curſes and execrations. O, 'twas a great ſin of the firſt magnitude; and yet to ſuch, and ſo vile a ſinner are theſe Tidings directed. It ſhews the virtue of the Goſpel of Chriſt's Death and Reſurrection; the greateſt ſinners, the moſt heinous offenders may get good by it. 'Tis the glory of Chriſt, and of his plentiful redemption, that it can purchaſe pardon for the moſt notorious ſinners. *O be merciful to my ſin, for it is great*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. xxv. 11. Though it be great, nay, becauſe it is great, thy mercy will be the more magnified in the pardoning of it. As a Sovereign Medicine is not only good for leſſer ails, and ordinary diſeaſes; but is able to cure the moſt dangerous ſickneſs. And Chriſt's Reſurrection, it hath a ſpecial virtue to work that great work. St. *Peter* acknowledges that this was it that recovered him; *Bleſſed be God that hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 3. Chriſt's Reſurrection raiſed *Peter* from his hopeleſs condition. And

St. *Paul*

A St. *Paul* aſcribes this great work of ſaving of ſinners to Chriſt's Reſurrection: *Epheſ.* i. 2. *You hath he quickned, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; even when we were dead in ſins, hath he quickned us together with Chriſt, and raiſed us up togethrr with Chriſt.* He tells us, Chap. i. 19. *God ſhews the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward, which he wrought in Chriſt, when he raiſed him from the dead,* Verſe 20. As Kings at their Coronation, pardon the greateſt offenders: ſo on this day of Chriſt's exaltation, he diſpatches a pardon to *Peter* here, though guilty of ſo great a ſin.

II. This Meſſage is ſent to *Peter*, Petro *graviſſimè vulnerato.*

B *Peter*'s Faith and Graces have received a very great bruiſe and maim, by his fall, his conſcience is deeply wounded. He is like one fallen from an high place, exceedingly bruiſed, and lies for dead. Such an one muſt be catched up in our arms, more carefully tended.

Sinners, the more dangerous their condition is, the more they ſtand in need of ſpeedieſt helps. Perſonal applications of the means of recovery muſt be uſed to ſuch. As a ſick, weak body muſt be more carefully looked to; not only have meat ſet before him, and bid him feed, but we muſt feed him our ſelves, put it into his mouth. As *Paul* recovered *Eutychus*, when he lay for dead, *Acts* xx. 10. *he went to him,*

C *he fell on him, and embraced him*, and ſo fetcht life into him.

III. This Meſſage is ſent to *Peter*, Petro *acerbiſsimè dolenti. Peter* is now overwhelmed with ſorrow for his heinous ſin, he wept bitterly, no doubt abhorred himſelf in duſt and aſhes: And to extraordinary mourners, God graciouſly directs extraordinary, and ſpecial, and more perſonal comforts. As extraordinary ſinners muſt be perſonally dealt withal; general reproofs will not ſtir ſuch: ſo deep Penitents muſt have perſonal and particular aſſurances of comfort ſealed up unto them.

See how *Paul* writes perſonally for the penitent *Corinthian*, that

D they ſhould take ſpecial care of him, *leſt he were ſwallowed up of ſorrow.* The conſcience after ſome great guilt, is hardly perſwaded or drawn to comfort by common means. Chriſt's perſonal look upon *Peter*, that brought him to repentance. The Angel's perſonal meſſage to *Peter*, that's the way to bring him to comfort. And this is the benefit of perſonal Abſolution in caſes of diſtreſs; which they that neglect, neglect their own comfort.

Had this Meſſage run only in general Terms, *Go, tell his Diſciples*; *Peter's* dejected heart might have diſclaimed his intereſt in it: "Oh, "'tis ſent to his Diſciples, but I am not worthy to be a Diſciple, I have

E "forſaken him, and denyed him, and abjured him. His ſoul will refuſe theſe general comforts. Well, be of good comfort *Peter*, He calls thee by Name, to thee in particular is this comfort directed. *Petrus vocatur ex nomine, nè deſperaret ex negatione*, Greg.

And ſee the main comfort is fetcht from Chriſt's Reſurrection: that, throughly conſidered, effectually applyed, will revive and chear up the moſt penſive Creature; it will put life and ſpirit into the moſt

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fainting heart. See how St. *Paul* chears up *Timothy*, exhorts him not to faint in his Miniſtery; but to endure hardſhip for the Goſpel of Chriſt: what's the Cordial with which he comforts him? 2 *Tim.* ii. 8. *Remember that Jeſus Chriſt was raiſed from the dead according to my Goſpel.* What? a faint-hearted Souldier under a victorious, conquering, and triumphing Commander? And thus alſo he ſupports his own weakneſſes, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 4. *Though Chriſt was crucified through weakneſs, yet he lives by the power of God; for we alſo are weak with him, but we ſhall live with him by the power of God.* Meditate on Chriſt's Reſurrection, and be not faithleſs but faithful. A

IV. This Meſſage is ſent unto *Peter*, Petro *ſummè ſcandaloſo*. *Peter* by his great fall in denying of Chriſt, hath incurred a great and an infamous ſcandal, given a great offence to the whole Church of God. This perſonal meſſage to him ſhall not only comfort his Conſcience, but cure his Credit too. It plainly ſignifies, he muſt not be caſt off, but be dealt mercifully withal, and accounted as a Brother. Nay, it reſtores him not only to his Diſcipleſhip, but to his Office of an Apoſtle. The Tidings are ſent to him under the name of *Peter*, his Apoſtolical Name. B

Call me not Naomi, but Marah, ſaid that ſorrowful Woman *Ruth*, Chap. i. 20. So would many a cenſorious One ſay, "Call him not "*Peter* a Rock, a chief Pillar of the Church; he hath been as *Reuben*, "unſtable as Water, he hath loſt his excellency. No, God is able to make him ſtand. If God owns him for a Childe, we muſt own him for a Brother. Count him not as an enemy, but admoniſh him; nay, comfort him as a Brother. The Meſſenger that brings them theſe Tidings, will teach them this Duty. 'Tis *Mary Magdalen*, to whom he firſt appeared, out of whom he had caſt out ſeven Devils, Verſe 9. The caſting out of ſeven Devils in her, gives good hope of pardoning three denyals in *Peter*. 'Twas a proud Hypocritical ſpirit in the elder Brother, that would not own the returning Prodigal. See how he juſtles him off, thruſts him away; *This thy Son* (ſaith He to his Father) *that hath lived riotouſly*: but what ſaith his Father? *This thy Brother was dead, and is alive*: "if I be thy Father, thou muſt acknowledge him "for thy Brother. C D

And ſo from this perſonal Meſſage to *Peter*, we may briefly collect theſe three Corollaries.

1. Here is *Indulgentia Chriſti*; the tender care that Chriſt takes of weak Chriſtians. As loving Parents are moſt tender of their weakeſt Children; ſo is Chriſt to the feeble Chriſtians, ſorrowful, heavy-hearted Chriſtians; his bowels of compaſſion yearn moſt towards them. The good Shepherd leaves the ninety Sheep, to ſeek and recover the ſtray, loſt Sheep. *Mater, quem ægrotantem novit, filium magis fovet, ſæpius complectitur*, Bern. The tender Mother layes the ſick childe in her lap, cheriſhes it in her boſom. E

2. Here is *Solicitudo Angeli*; the Angel pities *Peter*, and hath care and compaſſion on him. *Peter*'s Tears were the Wine of *Angels*, they were

A were a Banquet in heaven; there was joy in heaven among the Angels for his repentance. See now the Angel requites him, and ſpeeds Meſſages of joy and comfort to him, reaches out unto him the cup of Conſolation. Oh, 'tis the work of an Angel to comfort the afflicted. Could we ſpeak with the *Tongues of Angels*, if we want *this Charity* to poor, ſorrowful Chriſtians, we were *nothing worth*, Meſſengers of no value.

3. Here is *Officium Miniſtri*, in conformity to Chriſt, in imitation of his Angel, it muſt be our Duty to practiſe the charge given to theſe Meſſengers; have a care of *Peter*, of a ſorrowful, contrite, broken-hearted Chriſtian. See, the Angel is careful of him, and Chriſt is com-

B paſſionate to him, and ſhall we neglect him? *Non vult Deus, ut parvi pendas, quos ipſe minimè parvi pendit.* Chriſt prizes ſuch, and then we muſt not ſlight them. Nay, 'tis the nobleſt work of a Miniſter, his chiefeſt excellency, to raiſe up and comfort a broken-hearted Chriſtian. What ſaith the Prophet *Eſai?* Chap. l. 4. *The* LORD *hath given me the tongue of the learned* (what to do? to diſpute Controverſies, tie, and untie Knots in Divinity? No,) *that I might know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary.* 'Tis St. *Paul*'s trial of a ſpiritual man, *Gal.* vi. 1. *If any be overtaken in a fault, ye that are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs. Ye that are ſpiritual*; I,

C that's a ſign of a ſpiritual man, to comfort the comfortleſs. *Nihil adeò ſpiritualem virum demonſtrat, ac alienæ conſcientiæ tractatio*, Aug.

Now follows the

Third Particular of the Text, that's the Sum of the Meſſage, the News to be imparted, *He goes before you into Galilee, there ſhall ye ſee him.*

Indeed the ſcope and purpoſe of the Words is to aſſure them, that Chriſt is riſen again; and to eſtabliſh them in that Truth, he tells them where and how they ſhall know it. So then three things are obſervable.

D *Firſt*, An Intimation.
Secondly, A Prediction.
Thirdly, A Promiſe.
Firſt, Here is an Intimation of Chriſt's Reſurrection.
Secondly, A Prediction, *He goes before you into Galilee.*
Thirdly, A Promiſe, *There you ſhall ſee him.*

Firſt, Here is an Intimation of Chriſt's Reſurrection. The Angel is careful to confirm that Truth to them. Indeed, 'tis the main, capital Truth of Chriſtian Religion, the ſum, and pith, and kernel of the Goſpel. St. *Paul* makes this the main point of Chriſtianity, that Chriſt

E ſhould ſuffer, and be the firſt that ſhould riſe from the dead, *Acts* xxvi. 23. 'Twas the great employment and office of an Apoſtle, to be *a Witneſs of his Reſurrection*, Acts i. 22. This Truth, 'tis the foundamental Truth, it ſtrengthens our Faith in other ſaving Truths.

1. It confirms us in the Truth of his Divinity. *He was declared to be the Son of God by the Reſurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. *Thou wilt not give thine holy One to ſee corruption*, Pſal. 16. 10.

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II. It confirms to us the befit of his Death and Paſſion. His Reſurrection is that, which makes the merit of his Death effectual. Had he died only, death had overcome him; now he is riſen, he hath overcome death. Thus *David* in ſpirit ſpeaking of Chriſt, *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the Duſt praiſe thee? ſhall it declare thy truth?* Pſal. xxx. 9. No, but his Reſurrection did; that performed to us *the ſure mercies of David*, Acts xiii. 34.

III. This Intimation is the ſtrongeſt means to revive and comfort them. 'Twas matter of comfort for Chriſt to ſay, *Shee is not dead, but ſleeps.* 'Twas a comfort to *Martha* to hear that word, *Thy Brother ſhall riſe again.* But, *He is awakened from the ſleep of death, he is already raiſed from the dead*, this ſpeaks actual, preſent, full Comfort. Faith, 'tis like the Flower called *Heliotropium*, when the Sun ſets, it fades and cloſes; when the Sun riſes and returns, it blows out and flouriſhes. As *Jacob* could not be comforted all the time *Joſeph* was ſuppoſed dead: but *Joſeph* proves to be alive, and is highly advanced, that revives the ſpirit of *Jacob*, and puts life into him.

Secondly, Here is a Prediction, that muſt evidence the truth of his Reſurrection, *He goes before you into Galilee.* And here are three things.

I. An act of local Motion, *He goeth.*

II. A timely Prevention, *He goeth before you.*

III. The deſignation of the Place, that's *Galilee.*

I. Here is an act of local Motion. Chriſt's Body now, after his Reſurrection, 'tis a glorified Body, and yet within the compaſs and condition of a true natural body, to be transferred by motion from one place to another. Chriſt's Body, though glorified, yet retained the condition of a true natural body. At his Reſurrection, he laid aſide the infirmities of his humane body; but retained all the properties, and exerciſed the actions and functions of a true body.

1. After his Reſurrection, 'twas a finite body, *He is riſen, he is not here.* When it was in one place, it was not in another.

2. It was a ſenſible body, *Feel and handle me*, ſaith Chriſt, *a Spirit hath not fleſh and bone as I have*, Luke xxiv. 39.

3. It was organical, we read of his Hands, Feet, Side. It had all the parts and members of a humane body, in a juſt proportion and ſcituation, the fit proportions of a humane body.

'Tis a uſual Truth to be known againſt that groſs errour of the corporal preſence of Chriſt's body in the Sacrament. The Papiſts, that they may maintain, that Chriſt is preſent in the Sacrament, not only ſpiritually, but corporally; not only preſent to the ſoul of the Believer, but on the Altar, and under the appearances of Bread and Wine; not only received in Faith, but by the mouth of the Body, and taken into the Stomach, as other meats; have turned this Myſtery, not ſo much into a Miracle, as into a Monſter. They teach, *That Chriſt may be at the ſame time in manifold places, ſitting in Heaven, and yet lying on the Altar.* Nay further, they ſay,

1. That

A 1. That Chriſt's body in the Sacrament, but yet in a moſt vile, debaſing manner, hath no power naturally of himſelf to move himſelf.

2. That he hath no natural Faculties of ſenſe, no natural ability to hear or ſee.

3. No natural power of underſtanding to apprehend any thing preſent, or to remember any thing paſt.

Thus have they transformed Chriſt, the living God into an Idol: having Eyes, and ſeeing not: Ears, and hearing not: Feet, and walking not: Heart and underſtanding not. Such injury offer they to
B the glorious perſon of the Son of God.

II. Here is an act of Prevention, *He goes before you:* Early and ſpeedily he haſtens to *Galilee*, to viſite and comfort them. 'Tis the gracious courſe of God's preventing goodneſs, he is forward to relieve and comfort his Church. All delayes are tedious to him. Thus *Solomon* deſcribes the ſpeed Chriſt makes in viſiting his Church, *Cant.* ii. 17. *My well-beloved is like a Roe, or a young Hart, he comes leaping on the Mountains, skipping upon the Hills.* Early, betimes in the morning, he cauſes us to hear the voyce of joy and gladneſs: Nay, ſee the impatience of his love to his poor Diſciples, he appoints them *Galilee*,
C but he cannot with-hold himſelf ſo long from them, he appears to them ſooner:

1. To *Mary* in the Garden.
2. To the Women in the way, as they are going to *Jeruſalem*.
3. To the two Diſciples, as they are going to *Emmaus*.
4. To the Apoſtles, e're they ſtirred one foot out of the City.

This is the ſpeedineſs of his Mercy. *Eſai.* lxv. 24. *Before they call, will I anſwer; and, whileſt they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear.* He is ſtill better then his promiſe.

III. Here is the Deſignation of the Place, that's *Galilee*. Why
D to ſo remote a place?

(1.) *Ad exercitium fidei.* As 'tis ſaid of *Peter*'s ſinking, 'twas not *pedes*, but *fides*; not his Feet, but his Faith failed him: ſo Chriſt here requires them not to exerciſe their Feet, but their Faith. He would have them begin with Faith, and then they ſhall end in ſight. Had they not had ſome beginnings of Faith, that he was riſen, they would not have ſtirred one foot to have gone to ſee him. *Credendo, præparamur Deo*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. Firſt believe, let that have its work, and then, in good time, thou ſhalt ſee that which thy Faith believeth.

E (2.) He ſends them ſo far, *ad accendendum deſiderium*, the more to quicken and enflame their deſires and longings to ſee him. When the Spouſe in her Bed ſought him, *whom her ſoul loved*, with ſome lazie, drowſie, ſleepie Wiſhes, ſhe did not finde him; but when ſhe comes to be *ſick of love*, panting and longing after him, then ſhe enjoyed him. If he comes ſooner to them, 'tis to comfort them: if he ſtayes longer, 'tis to quicken and enliven their deſires towards him.

In

Serm. V.

In particular, *Galilee* is the Place appointed.

1. 'Twas *locus tutus*, he graciously provides for his Disciples safety; he calls them out of *Hierusalem*, the place of persecution, makes them withdraw themselves from that bloody generation, where they were beset with dangers, leads them into a place of safety, where, with greater freedom, they might converse with him. Thus God speaks to his people, *Esai.* xxvi 20. *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut the doors about thee, hide thy self, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.* Indeed, when they were endued with strength from above, then he bids them fill *Jerusalem* with their Preaching; now, in their fears, he mercifully tenders them. Here's our comfort in all our dangers, he will either shelter our weakness, that we may avoid them; or endue us with strength, that we may undergo them.

2. 'Twas *locus familiaris*, a place, where he had usually conversed with them; 'twas the place of his abode, he was called a *Galilean*. Purposely Christ chooses all the circumstances, that might help forward their Faith. In *Galilee* they had often enjoyed his presence, his appearing there would more fully affect them. As God gave *Moses* a sign to confirm him, *This shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee, when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain*, Exod. iii. 12. Thus Christ descends to all helps, suffers them to handle him, he eats and drinks with them, appears to them at the Sea-side, an usual place of resort, there they see him, and know him, *'Tis the Lord*, said *John* to *Peter*. He *was known to them by breaking of Bread*; an usual action of his by which they discerned him.

3. 'Twas *locus Discipulorum plenus*; It was a place, wherein Christ had most of his Disciples. His Preaching had nothing the success at *Jerusalem*, that it had at *Galilee*. In *Galilee* he was seen of five hundred Brethren at once. Here is the place, that Christ delights to visite and frequent, where he hath the fullest Churches, the greatest communion of Saints and Believers. This *David* foretels in that Psalm of Christ's Passion, *Psal.* xxii. 22. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Where two or three are gathered together, he will be present*; but multitudes of Disciples, they invite Christ to come amongst them. He walks among the seven golden Candlesticks, converses with his Churches. Thus the Spouse enquiring after Christ, *Cant.* i. 7. *Tell me, O thou, whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest:* He answers, *If thou know not, go thy way forth by the foot-steps of the Flocks.* Wouldest thou know where Christ is? He is amongst his Disciples. He is most fully there where most Christians are.

4. 'Tis *locus Typicus*. Christ calls them from *Jewry* to *Galilee*; it casts the shadow of a Type and Prefiguration; it represents to us the passage and remove of Christ and his Gospel, from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles*. 'Tis called *Galilee of the Gentiles*, Matth. iv. 15. *Hierusalem* hath forfeited God's Covenant; that City, and Temple, and Worship,

A Worſhip, muſt give place to *Galilee*, to the fulneſs of the Gentiles. Upon the Reſurrection, the Goſpel was preached to the Gentiles. Thus Chriſt ſingles out *Jonas* to be a lively Type of his Reſurrection; *As Jonas was three dayes, and three nights in the belly of the Whale; ſo ſhall the Son of Man be three dayes and nights in the Grave, and then riſe again.* Of all the Prophets, *Jonas* was the Prophet of the Gentiles, ſent to *Niniveh*, the head City of the Gentiles. Amongſt them was the Type of the Reſurrection performed. Not only the calling of the Jews, but the converſion of us Gentiles, 'tis a riſing from the dead. Chriſt preached this Doctrin to thoſe *Greeks*, that came to ſee him, and
B they were Gentiles: *John* xii. 24. *Except a corn of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.* His Reſurrection 'tis the harveſt of the Gentiles.

Before, in his life time, he confined his own preſence and preaching to the Nation of the Jews, and forbad his Apoſtles to preach unto the Gentiles; but his Reſurrection brake down the *Wall of ſeparation*, now their commiſſion is enlarged, *Go, teach all Nations.* Before, like *David*, he reigned only in *Hebron*; now, that he is riſen again, he rules over all *Iſrael.* The fulneſs of the Gentiles are given unto him. Indeed Chriſt foretold it before, but yet more darkly, by a glance
C only, and intimation, in his Sermon at *Nazareth*, Luke iv. 25. *There were many Widows in Iſrael, in the dayes of Elijah; but he was ſent to none of them, but to the Widow of Sarepta*; ſhe was a Gentile: *and there were many Lepers in Iſrael, in the times of Eliſha; but none were cleanſed, but Naaman the Syrian.* This Doctrine then the Jews endured not; nay, the very Apoſtles themſelves could not well brook it; but after the Reſurrection, they then gladly confeſt it, *Acts* xi. 18. *Then hath God alſo to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* And that's our condition, we were ſinners of the Gentiles, we are made partakers of his Reſurrection.

D

E

A SERMON *Preached on* ASCENSION-DAY.

St. JOHN xx. 17.

Go to my Brethren, and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.

THE Function and Office of our Saviours Mediatourſhip was exerciſed and performed, in a double State and Condition.

Firſt, The firſt was a State of Debaſement and Humiliation; *He humbled himſelf, and made himſelf of no reputation*, Phil. ii. 7. He deſcended to be a Man, nay a Worm, *Deus, vermiculus*. A ſtrange ſtooping and condeſcenſion!

Secondly, The ſecond was a State of Advancement and Exaltation; *God highly exalted him*, Phil. ii. 9. lifted up his Head, placed his Throne above all Thrones, and Principalities, made him higher then the heavens, moſt high in the glory of God the Father. They are two large Dimenſions.

Firſt, The Depth of his Humiliation.

Secondly, The Height of his Glory.

His Humiliation is that which the Scripture firſt inſiſts upon. And in it were three ſteps of Deſcent:

Firſt, The firſt is his ſtooping unto Death, in laying down his Life.

Secondly, The ſecond is his ſtooping into the Grave, his enting into that Hold of Death.

Thirdly, The third is his ſtooping into the continuance and abode in it, his enduring the bands of death, and lying under the power of it.

Sermon I.

Answerable unto which three steps of Debasement, were the three steps and degrees, of his Advancement and Exaltation.

First, Opposite to the Humiliation of his Death, is the Glory and Advancement of his Reviving and Resurrection.

Secondly, Opposite to his Descension into that Prison of Death, is his entring into the Region of Life: that's the Glory of his Ascension. And then,

Thirdly, Opposite to his Abode and Continuance in that place of Misery, is his sitting at the right hand of his Father in highest glory. Our Faith having made a publick profession and acknowledgment of his first degree of Advancement in the glory of his Resurrection; we must proceed further, and adore him in the second degree of his magnificent Glory, in believing and honouring his glorious Ascension.

Let us remember the Doctrine, and perform the Duty, which Piety owes to this Day. A Mystery and blessed Truth it is, more fully revealed to us Christians. *'Tis well known, O God, how thou wentest into thy Sanctuary.* He was seen of Angels and of Men, when he was received up into glory. But yet it had many prefigurations and imitations of it, even in the Old Testament. That afforded three remarkable Types of it: that contains three clear Prophecies of it.

I. *Enoch*, he was translated by God out of this World, and really, and bodily taken up into Paradise. His wonderful Translation was a lively prefiguration of Christ's glorious Ascension.

II. *Elias* his Rapure, he was mounted upon those Chariots of Salvation, and bodily carryed up to the place of Glory. Both these were *Anti-ambulones Christi*; Ushers and Forerunners of his Ascension. And,

III. The High-Priest, by God's Appointment, was to enter through the Veil of the Temple into the Holy of Holies, there to appear before the Mercy-Seat: thereby typifying our great High-Priest, who passed through the Heavens, and appeared before the Throne of Grace and Glory, and made intercession for us. And from thence sent down his Holy Spirit upon us.

And as these three Types prefigured it, so the Fathers insist upon three Prophesies that foretold it.

1. *Psalm* xxiv. 7. There *David* in Spirit foresees his glory, foretells his Ascension, *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting Doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.* As a King, when he enters into his Royal City, they set open their Gates, pluck up their Portcullis, and make Way for his entrance. Then again,

2. *Psalm* lxviii. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.* This Song and Psalm of Triumph, King *David* penned when he saw his glory, and spake of him. And then,

3. *Esai.* lxiii. 1. There the Angels are represented wondring and magnifying his glorious Ascension. *Who is this that comes from Edom,*

A *Edom, with died garments from Bozrah? this, that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, mighty to ſave?* All thoſe heavenly Hoſts attended his Triumph; they caſt not down Boughs from the trees, as at his entry into *Jeruſalem*; but Crowns from their heads, when he entred into his Glory.

The Text then, 'tis a Declaration of the great Myſtery of Chriſt's glorious Aſcenſion. And 'tis made known, not by the Miniſtery of Man or Angel; but by the ſacred Oracle of Chriſt's own voyce, an immediate revelation of it from Chriſt to *Mary Magdalen*, to be conveyed by her to the Church of God. And in it we may obſerve theſe

B two Particulars:

Firſt, Is the Publication of it.

Secondly, Is the Thing it ſelf, that is made known and publiſhed.

Firſt, The Publication of it gives forth it ſelf in three Particulars:

Firſt, Here is an Injunction of the Duty, *But go.*

Secondly, Here is a Direction, to whom ſhe is ſent, *Go to my Brethren.*

Thirdly, Here is a Preſcription of the Form of Words, in which

C ſhe muſt publiſh it, *Say unto them, I aſcend.*

Firſt, Here is an Injunction of a Duty, *But go. Mary Magdalen* was now fallen at Chriſt's feet, and embraced them: ſo St. *Matthew* tells us, *Chap.* xxviii. 9. the uſual place for her humble and affectionate Devotion. She hangs about our Saviour. Now ſhe hath found him whom her ſoul loved: but Chriſt forbids any further embracing; *Touch me not, but go to my Brethren.* This embracing of his feet came *ex humano affectu*, out of a well-meant, but yet humane affection. She thought it the beſt evidence of her love and joy, to kiſs thoſe feet, which once ſhe had waſhed and bathed with her Tears, and now lately

D had ſeen bathed in his own blood. Chriſt rejects this teſtimony of her love, and directs her to a another more acceptable ſervice, "Leave "touching my natural body, and go comfort my myſtical body; *Go* "*to my Brethren*, carry theſe Tidings to them.

Our love to Chriſt is beſt ſhewn, not in our humane, paſſionate Affections to his bodily preſence; but in performance of theſe religious ſervices, which he requires of us. It fares now with *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom Chriſt had caſt out ſeven Devils, as it did out of that *Dæmoniack*, out of whom Chriſt had caſt out a whole Legion of Devils, *Mark* v. He much lingred after Chriſt's Bodily preſence; he

E prayed him, that he might be with him; but Chriſt ſuffered him not, but bad him go and publiſh how great things the Lord had done for him. Chriſt is now more advanced into a more ſpiritual condition, and ſo accepts not the offices of humane converſation; but expects at our hands the duties and ſervices of ſpiritual Devotion.

Secondly, Here is a Direction, to whom ſhe is ſent, *Go to my Brethren.* Whom means he by that? Sure, their conjecture is improbable,

Sermon I.

bable, that by *Brethren*, underſtand his Kinſmen according to the fleſh. No doubt, Chriſt ſends her to thoſe, to whom the Angel ſent her. And what ſaid he? *Go tell his Diſciples*, thoſe whom himſelf immediately after viſits and comforts. 'Tis that ſpiritual fraternity of Believers and Apoſtles; alluding to that of the Pſalmiſt, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren.* He had transferred that name of *Brethren* from his fleſhly kinſmen to his Apoſtles and Diſciples: *They, that do the will of my Father*, They are his Brethren, *Mat.*xii.50. To ſuch he ſends her.

And purpoſely, he uſes this gracious compellation of *Brethren*:

I. He owns them as Brethren, *ob conſanguinitatem Naturæ.* Having taken our Nature upon him, he acknowledges and accepts us to be his Brethren: He became *fleſh of our fleſh, bone of our bone:* He naturalized himſelf to us by his Incarnation:

1. To gain more intereſt in us; that, by the Law of propinquity of blood, he might have right to redeem us.

2. Thereby to breed more tenderneſs of bowels and compaſſion to us. *Homo ſum, humanum nihil à me alienum puto.* Hence St. *Paul* tells us, *He was partaker of fleſh and blood*, Heb. ii. 14. and *Verſe* 11. *Both he that ſanctifieth, and they that are ſanctified, are all of one; for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them Brethren.*

II. But yet ſomewhat more was in it. For never till now, in the whole courſe of the Goſpel do we find, that he vouchſafed them this favour to call them *Brethren.* Sometimes he calls them Servants. He tells them it was his wont ſo to call them, *John* xiii. 14, 15. *I am your Maſter.* Otherwhile he calls them *Friends*, John xv. 15. *I have called you friends.* And again, *Luke* xii. 4. *I ſay unto you, my Friends.* Elſewhere he calls them *Children*, Mark x. 24. Indeed ſometimes he terms them *Brethren* amongſt themſelves, *Mat.* xxiii. 8. *One is your Maſter, even Chriſt, and all ye are Brethren*; but never till now, he calls them his *Brethren.* Therefore to teſtifie the truth of his Reſurrection; that as by his Incarnation, he was our Brother by aſſuming our Nature to himſelf, ſo by his Reſurrection he continues ſtill our Brother, by reſuming and raiſing again the ſame Fleſh and Body.

'Tis a Rule in Logick, *Ceſſante fundamento, ceſſat relatio.* If he had not roſe again in our Humane Nature, but had taken to him ſome other body, this bleſſed relation of Brotherhood had ceaſed alſo. This community of Nature in his Reſurrection makes him ſtill to call them *Brethren.* Which makes him nearer to us, then to the Angels; they are Servants to him, no Brothers; they are Fellow-ſervants with us, but not our Brethren. They ſay at his Reſurrection, *Go, tell his Diſciples*, Mark xvi. 7. They ſpeak as Strangers or Friends, not as Kinſmen or Brethren.

There is a ſupernatural Birth, and ſo a ſpiritual Kinred by the Reſurrection. *This day have I begotten thee:* St. *Paul* applies it to the Reſurrection, *Acts* xiii.33. And anſwerably, Chriſtians are called

The

A *The Children of the Reſurrection,* Luke xx. 36. 'Tis the main Prop of our Faith, that Chriſt raiſed the ſame body, which was born of the Virgin, by which he is fleſh of our fleſh, and in it ſits at the right hand of God. It was a wicked Error of ſome Hereticks, that Chriſt carryed not his Humane body up to heaven, but laid it off, and left it in the Body of the Sun; miſ reading and miſ-applying that place in the Pſalm, *Poſuit Tabernaculum in Sole*: of which they made this fond conſtruction, That Chriſt aſcended in body as far as the Sun in the Firmament, and then made that his *Spoliarium* there he caſt off his Fleſh, and in Spirit only aſcended up to heaven. No, 'tis both our confeſſion
B and our comfort, that, as in his Incarnation he cloathed himſelf with our fleſh, ſo he reſumed it again at his Reſurrection, and carryed it with him into heaven at his Aſcenſion. *Quod ſemel aſſumpſit, nunquam depoſuit.* Believe all other Articles; yet, if we deny this, *our Faith is in vain, we are yet in our ſins.*

III. He calls them *Brethren,* purpoſely by this gracious Compellation to convey comfort unto them. The poor Diſciples, no queſtion, were greatly dejected and confounded in themſelves; they had all forſaken him, and fled from him; *Peter* had denyed him, and forſworn him: With what faces could they look on him? what exprobrations
C might they juſtly expect from him? See, to relieve and revive them, he ſends them no harſh, upbraiding Meſſage; but ſpeaks comfortably and lovingly to them, in terms of tenderneſs and deareſt affection. Thus *Joſeph-like,* he comforts them, *I am your Brother Joſeph:* They ſold him, theſe forſook Chriſt; yet ſtill, *I am your brother*; and asks them not, as *Joſeph* did them, *Doth my Father live?* but aſſures them, that his Father lives, and that he is a Father to them alſo. Nay, he exceeds *Joſeph* in compaſſion: *Joſeph* acted a part of ſtrangeneſs and ſeverity for a time: Chriſt his firſt meſſage to them is love. Thus, like the good Father in the Goſpel, he receives his returning Prodigal, nei-
D ther checks him, nor expoſtulates with him, but runs, and meets, and kiſſes, and embraces him with all loving affection. How loving will he be to thoſe that never forſake him, that is thus ſweet, and gracious to them, that fled from him and durſt not own him?

IV. He calls them *Brethren* after his Reſurrection, now in the ſtate of Exaltation, aſcending into his Glory. In his higheſt Exaltation, behold and admire his gracious Condeſcenſion; He hath laid aſide the ſtate of Humiliation, but not the Virtue and Grace of Humility. 'Tis true, that he might become our brother, he was fain to be humbled; but now he is exalted, he ſtill owns us for Brethren. As *Joſeph*
E in his higheſt honour, owns poor Shepherds and Herds-men, for his Kinred and Brethren.

Humility doth not only *go before Honour,* as *Solomon* ſaith; but it dwells with Honour, and doth ever accompany it. The Apoſtle ſaith it of our Saviour, *Heb.* ii. 11. *He is not aſhamed to call us Brethren.* He might well enough deſpiſe us, and diſclaim us in our baſe condition, but he doth not. 'Twas a Rule for the Kings of *Iſrael* (whoſe Kingdom

Sermon I.

Kingdom was a ſpecial prefiguration of the Kingdom of Chriſt) that *they ſhould not lift up their hearts above their Brethren.* And 'tis the grand Motive to lowlineſs of minde, that *Paul* uſes, *Phil.* ii. 5. *Let the ſame minde be in you, which was in Chriſt Jeſus. Learn of me,* ſaith Chriſt, *for I am lowly,* Mat. xi. 29. Nay, we had rather learn of thoſe that are lofty, and deſpiſe others of a lower condition.

'Tis reported of *CHARLES the Great,* That an *Heathen* King coming to the Court, with an intendment to turn Chriſtian, and ſeeing many poor people lying without on the ground, and enquiring who they were, when he heard they were Chriſtians, he changed his minde, reſolved not to be of that Religion, where the Worſhippers of that God were ſo much neglected. No, let the beſt of us Brother thoſe, whom Chriſt calls Brethren. *Have not the Faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of Glory, in reſpect of Perſons,* James ii. 1. In the Primitive Times, when this example of Chriſt was freſh in their Eys, how readily did the chiefeſt Chriſtians condeſcend to theſe terms of love? *Peter* a chief Apoſtle, ranks himſelf with his inferiours in the Church, *I am alſo an Elder,* 1 Pet. v. 1. *Paul* calls himſelf *a fellow-ſervant:* John, *Your Brother in the Kingdom of Chriſt,* Rev. i. 9. No eminency of Grace, no dignity of Place, no degree of Authority muſt make us forget this, to own and acknowledge even the loweſt Chriſtians, as our beloved Brethren. The proud rich man, *Luke* xvi. can be content to claim kinred of *Abraham,* he calls him, *Father Abraham*; but ye read not, that ever he ſaid, *Brother Lazarus*; and ye know what became of him. It will not ſerve us, nor ſave us, to be able to ſay, *Abraham is our Father*; except we will charitably acknowledge the pooreſt Chriſtian, even *Lazarus,* for our Brother.

V. Chriſt being now to aſcend into Heaven, he owns them for his Brethren; 'tis a relation of an eternal continuance. Being to leave them, he doth not now diſclaim that reference: but gives them aſſurance by this compellation, that he will acknowledge it in Heaven: *Matth.* xxv. 40. *The leaſt of theſe my Brethren.* Other humane Relations are but local and temporal, they ſerve for this life, and this world only; but when death and departure comes, they ceaſe and determine. As Chriſt at his Death, he calls the Virgin *Mary,* not Mother, but Woman; *Woman, behold thy Son,* John xix. 26. eſtranging himſelf from that which was humane and carnal in that Relation. I, but this ſpiritual Relation 'twixt Chriſt and us, it will hold in Heaven.

There is no marrying, or giving in marriage, no other civil Relations or Societies in heaven; only this bond of ſpiritual Brother-hood with Chriſt, it will laſt for ever. Children of God, and Children of the Reſurrection continue there, *Luke* xx. 36. This holy Relation is the denomination and bond of the whole Church, not only here, but in heaven alſo: *Epheſ.* iii. 14, 15. *For this cauſe I bow my knee unto the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole Family of heaven and earth is named.* All of us are joyned in an holy communion with

A with God, and brotherhood with Chriſt. That Relation is eternal, which is grounded upon that communion and fellowſhip which is eternal. The *Jews* have a ſaying, "That when a *Pagan* or *Idolater* "loſes his Father, he hath good cauſe to mourn; becauſe he hath "nothing left him, but a Stock or Stone to be his Father. But a right believer, though his earthly Father dies, he hath cauſe to be comforted, for he hath a Father in Heaven. *Though Abraham know us not, and Iſrael be ignorant of us; yet doubtleſs thou art our Father:* this *Name is for everlaſting*, Eſai. lxiii. 16. Gain this holy and happy Relation, that Chriſt is thy Brother, it will laſt thee in Heaven.

B VI. Chriſt being to leave them, and to aſcend into Heaven, he calls them *Brethren*; thereby to combine them in this peaceful bond, and endearing Aſſociation. He deſires to leave them as Brethren, in an holy union. Purpoſely he links them into this Society; if they will own him they muſt own each other. Diſclaim Chriſt for your Brother, or elſe Brother every Chriſtian. It was his laſt bequeathment, Love and Peace: *My Peace I leave with you*, John xiv. 27. As *Joſeph* parting with his Brethren, he layes this charge upon them, *Fall not out by the way*, Gen. xlv. 24.

Indeed the Name of Brethren, 'tis the choice Style of the Goſpel. C *Mat.* xxiii. 8. *All ye are Brethren.* 'Tis the improvement of Charity under the New Teſtament. Under the Law we meet it more rarely: *Proximus*, thy Neighbour, that's the more uſual Relation there, *Love thy Neighbour*: But the Goſpel offers more Grace, *Love as Brethen*, 1 Pet. iii. 8. 'Twas the main Title, by which the Diſciples were named, before they were called *Chriſtians*, *Believers* and *Brethren*. And ſo St. *Peter* calls the community of Chriſtians, an *holy Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. iii. 17. *Love the Brotherhood.* This Brotherly Love, 'tis the Evidence of our Election, the Seal of our Adoption, the Badge of our Profeſſion, the Pledge of our Salvation. How ſhould we tender and D maintain this ſacred Aſſociation, of which Chriſt is the Founder and firſt of that Order? *He is the firſt born amongſt many Brethren*, Rom. viii. 29. Here he puts upon us this bond of Peace, when he goes from us; and St. *Peter* exhorts us, that when he returns again to us at the laſt day, *we be diligent that we be found of him in peace*, 2 Pet. iii. 14. *Receive ye one another, as Chriſt received us to the glory of God*, Rom. xv. 7.

We come to the next Particular; That's

Thirdly, The Preſcription of the form of Words, in which ſhe muſt make this Publication, *Say unto them, I aſcend.* And this form and E manner of Publication, 'tis obſervable upon two Reaſons.

I. 'Tis *Aſcendo*, not *Aſcendit.* It comes as a perſonal Speech, directed from himſelf, and in his own Name: not a matter of Collection or Obſervation; but of report and perſonal relation. They are *verba recitativa* (as they uſe to call the Sacramental Forms.) She muſt not ſay, *He doth aſcend*; but, *Say*, in my Name, *I do aſcend*; For three Reaſons.

1. *Ob*

Sermon I.

1. *Ob majorem auctoritatem.* His immediate words reported and pronounced to them, as from his own mouth, will bear the most Sway and Authority. 'Tis the commanding style of Sacred Truth, *I the* LORD *speak it.* 'Tis his Name that gives power to it. *Hæc dicit Dominus*, 'tis the Seal of Truth. *Ezek.* iii. 17. *Thou shalt hear the word from my mouth, and give them warning from me.* That word is most prevalent, that hath most from God, and least from Man. *I have delivered unto you what I have received*, saith St. *Paul*: *Quod recepimus*; *non*, *Quod excogitavimus*: 'tis a Tradition from God, not Invention of Man. His Ministers are but *Internuncii*, Reporters and Relaters. All Writs issue out in the King's Name. It made *Eglon*, though an *Heathen* King, rise up with reverence, when *Ehud* said, *I have a message from God unto thee*, Judg. iii. 20. A B

2. 'Tis thus directed in this Form of words, *I ascend, ob majorem consolationem*; 'tis more comfort to have a word from his own mouth, than from any other man's intimation. 'Twas a token of strangeness in *Joseph*, to speak to his Brethren by an Interpreter; and it was great comfort to them, when he said, *I am your Brother Joseph; your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaks unto you*, Gen. xlv. 12. His word indeed, it speaks comfort; *non sonans, sed penetrans*; *non loquax, sed efficax*; *non obstrepens auribus, sed affectibus blandiens*, Bern. A Message from his own mouth, 'tis as fruit from the *Tree of Life*, it presently revives them. C

3. *Ob majorem fiduciam.* It would never have prevailed with their Faith, to have had it from any other hand, then from Christ himself. None but Christ, can dictate and warrant this profession to our Faith, *My Father, and your Father, my God, and your God.* Who durst draw out such a form of belief, but Christ himself? The Messengers of *Benhadad* durst not claim Brotherhood of a conquering King of *Israel*, till *Ahab* himself was pleased to say, *My Brother Benhadad*; much less could Faith have presumed to use this high style and profession, had not Christ himself here prescribed it to us. God must first say, *Seek thou my face*; before we can say, *Thy face,* LORD, *will I seek.* If all the Angels in heaven should tell us, that Christ is our Brother, God is our Father; Faith could not embrace it: It must be a word from Christ, that must give us that assurance. Thus the Minister, in Christ's Name, saying, *I baptise thee*; *I absolve thee*; *I pronounce thee justified and pardoned*; doth more then all the Angels in heaven can do, they cannot say it. That's the first, *Ascendo*, not *Ascendit.* D

II. This Form prescribed, is observable upon another Reason; 'tis *Ascendo*, not *Ascensurus sum.* He saith, *I do ascend*, now in the present Time: He saith not, *I shall hereafter ascend.* And yet Christ was not now in the act of ascending, 'twas forty dayes after. So long he conversed and abode amongst them; and yet we see here, he expresses himself in a form of the present time, *I now ascend.* E

1. This form of speaking shews the Certainty of his Ascension; he was as sure to ascend to heaven, as if he were now mounting *upon the wings*

Sermon I.

A *wings of the winde.* 'Tis the ſtyle of Truth and Infallibility, to ſpeak of things to come, as of paſt or preſent, becauſe they ſhall be certainly accompliſhed in their due ſeaſon. *Fecit quæ futura ſunt*, as ſome read it and apply it. This certainty of Divine Predictions makes the Prophets uſe thoſe anticipations of Time in their Prophecies, *To us a Son is born*, and the like: ſpeaking rather like Evangeliſts then Prophets; telling an Hiſtory rather then fortelling a Prophecy: Eſpecially in all their Predictions of Chriſt. This Certainty makes him *call thoſe things that are not, as if they were.*

2. *I do Aſcend*, expreſſed in the preſent Time; becauſe now all
B his thoughts and meditations were upon his Aſcenſion, uſes no more humane, earthly converſation; but, after his Reſurrection, he is entring upon another ſtep and degree, his glorious Aſcenſion. Chriſt's Immortality ſorts not with this valley of Death; but in heart, and thought, and preparation, he is mounting up to heaven. *Why ſeek you the living among the dead?* ſaid the Angel at his Reſurrection; nor muſt we expect the immortal and glorified Son of God amongſt mortal and miſerable men.

3. His Aſcenſion is expreſſed in the preſent Time, to quicken and ſtir up the ſlowneſs of their Faith. They are doubting and diſtruſting
C the Truth of his Reſurrection, and yet Chriſt is now finiſhing and propounding a new Article of Faith to their Belief, the Article of his Aſcenſion. What? ſhall they ſtill doubt of his Reſurrection? Here is a new Leſſon to be learned, the Doctrine and Myſtery of his Glorious Aſcenſion. O, this backwardneſs of their Belief, it held Chriſt out of heaven: He is fain to foreſlow his glory, to ſet back his Aſcenſion, to recover their Faith. *He muſt be believed on in the world, and* then *received up into glory*, 1 Tim. iii. 16.

We have done with the Publication: Now follows,

Secondly, The Thing it ſelf, to be publiſhed, that is his Aſcenſion.
D And in it are two things conſiderable.

Firſt, Is *Motus*, the Motion, *I Aſcend.*

Secondly, Is *Terminus motûs*, that to which he doth aſcend. And in it two things.

I. Is the Specification of the Term, that's *To the* LORD.

II. Is the Amplification and Deſcription of him by a two-fold Relation.

1. The Relation of a *Father.*

2. Of *God.* And each of theſe have a double Aſpect:

(1.) Towards Chriſt, *My Father, my God.*

E (2.) Towards the Apoſtles and Believers, *To your Father, and to your God.*

Firſt, Is the Motion, *I aſcend.* For underſtanding this Myſterie of Chriſt's Aſcenſion, briefly let us conſider it in three Particulars.

I. Conſider it as a Motion, therein the Reality of it.

II. As an Action, therein the Cauſe of it.

III. In the Intention, that ſhews the Purpoſe of it.

Sermon I.

I. For the Truth of his Aſcenſion, it was a real motion. As was his Reſurrection out of the Grave a real motion; ſo was his Aſcenſion into the Heavens. It was not a diſappearing only, and vaniſhing out of their ſight; nor (as others erroneouſly teach) an alteration of ſtate and condition only: but a real tranſlation and removal of his body from earth to heaven. The Scripture expreſſes it in words of property and reality, *I leave the world*, ſaith Chriſt, *and go to the Father*, Joh. xvi. 28. *He was taken up, and a cloud received him*, Acts i. 9. *He was received up into heaven*, Mark xvi. 19. *He was parted from them, and carryed up into heaven*, Luke xxiv. 51. What *Paul* ſaith of the Reſurrection, 'tis true alſo of his Aſcenſion: They that made it only ſpiritual, turned it into an Allegory, they deſtroyed the Faith. In this caſe we may invert the Words of the Apoſtle, *Litera vivificat, Spiritus occidit*; the Literal ſenſe is the ſaving ſenſe. To turn his Aſcenſion into a ſpiritual Notion, is dangerous and deadly. A

II. It is an Action, that's implyed in this Word, *Aſcendo*. 'Tis one of thoſe Motions, which the Philoſopher ſaith, hath the Principle and Cauſe of it within the thing moved; as his coming out of the Grave, 'tis called not a Reſuſcitation, but a Reſurrection, not a raiſing by another, but a riſing by himſelf. Indeed ſometimes Chriſt's going up to heaven is aſcribed to his Father, and ſo 'tis called an Aſſumption, *Acts* ii. 33. *Being by the right hand of God exalted.* And, in ſubordination to this, Chriſt prayes his Father to *glorifie him*, John xvii. 5. But here, and elſewhere, 'tis aſcribed to his own Perſon; and that makes it properly to be called an Aſcenſion. And this his Aſcenſion he cauſed partly by the power of his God-head; his eternal Spirit, as it quickned him, and raiſed him from the dead, ſo likewiſe it lifted him up, and mounted him up to heaven: and then partly it was effected, and wrought by that ſupernatural Quality, and endowment of his glorified Body, by which it was able to move and diſpoſe it ſelf, without any reſiſtance or difficulty, as himſelf pleaſed. As, for a time, he walked upon the Water; ſo now, by that power, he walks upon the liquid Air: and the *Clouds are the duſt of his feet*, as the Prophet *Nahum* ſpeaks. *Elias*, he needed the ſupport of Angels, like Horſes and Chariots, when he was taken up to heaven: Chriſt indeed had the attendance, but not the aſſiſtance and ſupport of Angels in his glorious Aſcenſion. B C D

III. The End and Purpoſe of this Aſcenſion, that was manifold.

1. To aſſume that glory, which he had laid aſide for our ſakes, and which was due to him upon his ſufferings. *Ought not Chriſt to ſuffer theſe things, and ſo to enter into his Glory?* Luke xxiv. 26. His aſcending into heaven was his enting not only *in Regnum*, but *in Regiam gloria*. Heaven is not only the Kingdom, but the chief Place of the Kingdom, the Court and Palace of Glory. E

2. He aſcended to Triumph over all our ſpiritual Enemies: as the *Roman* Conquerors in their Ovations and Triumphs, aſcended into the

A the Capitol. Thus *David* deſcribes the end of his Aſcenſion; *When he aſcended up on high, he led Captivity captive.* As Conquerours lead their Captives in chains, before and after their Chariots; ſo did *Chriſt* triumph gloriouſly over Death, and Hell, and Satan. *Riſe up Barak, and lead thy Captivity captive, thou Son of Abinoam.* In his Paſſion he did ſubdue our Enemies; that was *Campus Victoriæ*, the Field of his Victory: but, in his Aſcenſion, there he Triumphed over them; that was *Currus Triumphi*, the Chariot of his Triumph.

3. He aſcended into Heaven to *prepare a place for us.* He had purchaſed it by his Paſſion, he prepares it for us by his Aſcenſion, *John* B xiv. 3. Heaven was ſhut up againſt us, as was Paradiſe to *Adam*; but Chriſt, he makes a *re-entry* for us, and in our name he takes poſſeſſion of it: *Epheſ.* ii. 6. *He hath made us ſit together in heavenly places with Chriſt. Confidite, caro, & ſanguis; uſurpâſtis cœlum, & regnum in Chriſto.* Tertull.

4. He aſcended up to heaven, from thence to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt upon us. *John* xvi. 7. *'Tis expedient I go away; if I go not, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you.* 'Twas the great fruit of his Aſcenſion, the pouring forth of the Holy Ghoſt. This *Peter* declares in his firſt Sermon upon the day of Pentecoſt *Acts* C ii. 33. *Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear. When he aſcended up on high, he gave gifts to men,* ſaith *David.* As Conquerours, in their Triumphs, have their *Miſſilia*, are munificent to their Followers; having made up our peace, as a fruit of our peace, he obtains for us the Holy Ghoſt.

5. He aſcended into heaven, there to appear before God, as a gracious prevailing Interceſſor for us. He is our Agent in heaven, negotiates and ſolicits his Father for us. He enters into heaven, as the High-Prieſt, with all our Names on his Shoulders, and on his Breaſt; there D he tenders his merits for us, interpoſes his mediation, preſents our Prayers, and makes them accepted of God the Father. *Tantum de motu.* Now follows,

Secondly, The Term of this Aſcent. And 'tis not *Terminus unde.* He ſaith not, *I aſcend from you*, that was uncomfortable; *Abeo, recedo*, before, made their hearts ſad: but here he ſpecifies the Term, whither he aſcends. And whereas there might have been many wayes of expreſſing of that; as

I. *In cœlum*, to *aſcend into heaven*, Mark xvi. 19. Or,

II. *In gloriam*, to *enter into glory*, Luke xxiv. 26.

E III. *In regnum*, to *receive a Kingdom*, Luke xix. 22. *far above Angels, and Principalities, and Powers*, Epheſ. 1. 21. All of them magnificent Deſcriptions of his Aſcenſion; but ſee, here Chriſt inſiſts on none of theſe, but *I aſcend to my Father.* All the other fall ſhort of this:

1. This makes his Departure to be better endured. *If ye love me, ye would rejoyce, becauſe I go to the Father*, John xiv. 28.

Sermon I.

2. It makes his Aſcenſion more glorious Many other acceſſions of Glory there were in his Aſcenſion; that *all things are put under his feet*, Eph. i. 22. that's but *gloria Scabelli*, the glory of his Foot-ſtool: but to ſit at the right hand of God, to be moſt high in the glory of God the Father, that's the ſubſtantial, tranſcendent Glory, that's *gloria Throni*, the glory of his Throne. A

3. 'Tis the ſweeteſt and moſt comfortable expreſſion, nay the very beatifical expreſſion. 'Tis that which *Paul* makes the comfortable Death, *Abſent from the Body, and preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 8. *We ſhall be taken up in the clouds, and be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. And that's *ſpecificatio Termini*. B

We come to the Amplification and Deſcription of this Term in a twofold relation:

1. Of Father.
2. Of God. And both theſe reſpectively,
   (1.) To Chriſt: and then,
   (2.) To Us.

1. God is Chriſt's Father; that's in reference to his Divinity, an high and hidden Myſtery to be believed and adored, not to be pryed and ſearched into. He is the ſecond Perſon in the glorious Trinity, *begotten of God the Father before all worlds*. And as this Truth is to be adored for the Myſtery of it; ſo 'tis to be embraced for the comfort of it. C

1. It aſſures us of the prevailing efficacy of his Mediation. Our Interceſſour, that pleads our Cauſe in Heaven, is no ſtranger or friend only; but the great Favourite of Heaven, the only begotten, the dearly beloved Son of God; *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*: then comes, *Ask of me, and I will give thee*, Pſal. ii. 7, 8. God the Father will deny nothing to his beloved Son. If he plead our cauſe, we are ſure to prevail.

2. As it ſtrengthens the efficacy of his Mediation; ſo it magnifies the mercy of our Adoption. Chriſt is the Son of God, his only Son, his beloved Son, *in whom his ſoul delighteth*. What needs ſuch a Father of ſuch a Son ever think of adopting ſtrangers into his Family, and to make them his Sons? *Sarahs* Speech is the uſual voice of Natural Parents, *The Son of a Bond-woman ſhall not be heir with my Son Iſaac*. Adoption, 'tis a remedy in Law, to make up the want of Natural Iſſue. Who will engraff a wilde Olive-branch into a fruitful Olive-tree? Yet this is God's gracious dealing with us, he takes us into the fellowſhip of his beloved Son. Not only *Iſhmael* the bond-ſon; but *Eleazar* of *Damaſcus*, his bond-ſervant, is made Co-heir with *Iſaac*. 'Twas not neceſſity, but mercy that moved him to do it. D E

2. God is Chriſt's God too; that's in reſpect of Chriſt's Humanity; ſo Chriſt is inferiour, and ſubject to the Father; as a Creature is ſubject to the Creatour. In this inference the Scripture calls our Saviour, *the ſervant of God: Behold my ſervant, whom I have choſen*, Mat. xii. 18.

St. *Paul*

A St. *Paul* joyns them both together, 2 *Cor.* xi. 31. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* It must be a Rule to direct our understanding of divers places of Scripture which speak variously of Christ.

1. Sometimes in terms of Equality with the Father.

2. Sometimes in terms of Subjection and Inferiority.

It posed the Doctors of the *Jews*, they could not reconcile these two Truths, that Christ was *David*'s Lord, and yet *David*'s Son. It made the *Jews* imagine a double Messias: one, the Son of *Joseph*, an afflicted Man; another, the Son of *David*, potent and glorious.

(2.) But then, we have here a second Relation, and 'tis an exempli-
B fication of that in Christ; it confirms us to the Image of his Son, *that he might be the first-born amongst many brethren*, Rom. viii. 29. *He ascends to our Father, and to our God.* These blessed Relations, *Our Father, our God*; let us lay hold on both of them; sunder them not, part with neither of them; joyn them in our faith, joyn them in our Comfort, joyn them in our Confidence, joyn them in our Duty. They are two great supports of Faith, *Posse* and *Velle*, in *Pater* and *Deus*.

1. Joyn them in our Faith; first our Father, then our God. Were he not our Father, yet he were *Deus in se*, he is God in himself; and
C he were *Deus noster*, our God by power and dominion: but by fruition, and love, and sweetness of affection, so he must be our Father, and then he will be our God. These two, *Meus* and *Noster*, they are Faith's Possessives, they are the embracings of Faith: by them we lay hold on God with both hands; *Our Father, our God.*

2. Joyn both these Relations to our Comfort. 'Tis the only comfortable way of apprehending of him to interpose his gracious Paternity and Father-hood, 'twixt us and his Deity. Cloath him with this gracious Relation of *our Father*, and then we may approach to him in his glorious Relation of *our God*. Here Mercy and Majesty are met
D together, Grace and Glory embrace each other.

3. Joyn them in our Confidence; *Our Father, our God.* If he be *our Father*, then he is *our God*; it will make all the Attributes and Excellencies of his God-head to become ours. If he be *my Father* and *my God*, his Power is for me, his Wisdom is for me, his Justice, his Mercy; this Relation gives us interest in them all, they shall be useful and beneficial for us. Ye know what the loving Father saith to his Son in the Gospel, *Son, all that I have is thine.*

4. We must joyn them both in our Duty. Look upon him in both Relations, remember him so to be *thy Father*, that thou forget'st him
E not to be *thy God*. As they are *termini fiduciæ*, grounds of Confidence: so they must be *termini reverentiæ*, motives of reverence. Comfort and Confidence, may well consist with awe and reverence. What saith St. *Peter? If ye call him Father, who, without respect of persons, judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* Faith and Fear, answers to Father and God. See how Christ calls upon his Father, and imitate him; *I thank thee Father,*

Lord

Sermon I.

Lord of Heaven and Earth, Mat. xi. 25. No Relation on God's part or Intereſt on our part, or Privileg from both, muſt exempt us from the duty of Fear and Reverence. Neither the aſſurance of God's being our Father, or Chriſt our Brother, or we Co-heirs with him, muſt make us lay aſide the thoughts of both of them to be our God. Away with ſuch Apprehenſions, or Geſtures, or Repreſentations of ſuch equal relation, as ſhould make us lay aſide our Homage and Reverence. A

But then again, put theſe Relations together, *My Father, and your Father*; *My God, and your God*: and then take a threefold Conſideration of them: B

1. In Conjunction.
2. In Diſtinction.
3. In Subordination.

1. In Conjunction. Chriſt and we have all one Father, the ſame God. *Epheſ.* iii. 14, 15. *He is the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom the whole Family of Heaven and earth is named.* Hence it is, that Chriſt is called, *the firſt-born among many Brethren.*

1. We have the ſame Original. He is *begotten of God*, and we likewiſe are *born of God*, as St. *John* ſpeaks frequently in his Epiſtle. C

2. Chriſt and we, are all of the ſame Family and Houſe-hold, all of us *Filii Familiâs*, as the Patriarchs ſaid of themſelves, *We are all one man's ſons.*

3. We have all the ſame Inheritance allotted to us. *If ſons, then Heirs*, and *joynt-heirs with Chriſt*, Rom. viii. 17. Not put off with portions, but heirs of the Promiſes.

2. See theſe Relations in their Diſtinctions. Chriſtus *nunquam dixit* Pater Noſter, *ſed* Pater meus, *aut* Pater veſter; *ſic jungit ut diſtinguat*; *ſic diſtinguit, ut non ſejungat.* Aug. *Tract.* 21. *in* Joan. Though there be a Conjunction, yet Chriſt puts a difference, makes a diſtinction. He ſaith not, *I aſcend to our Father, and to our God*; but, with a note of difference, *To my Father, and your Father, to my God, and to your God.* Indeed there is the ſame relation, but a diverſity in the ground and foundation of it. God is otherwiſe Chriſt's Father, otherwiſe our Father. He is his Father from all eternity; he is our Father in the diſpenſation of time: he is his Father by Nature, ours by Grace: his Father by Generation, ours by Adoption. He is God's Son, as *Joſeph* was *Jacob*'s Son, by Birth; we are his Sons, as *Manaſſeh* and *Ephraim* were *Jacob*'s Sons, by Adoption. He is *filius natus*, born a Son; we are *filii facti*, made Sons. He begat Chriſt of his own Subſtance naturally, neceſſarily: but *'tis of his own will, that he begat us*, Jam. i. 18. D E

3. Here is a Subordination in theſe Relations. Firſt, *My Father*, then *your Father*; *My God*, then *your God.* Here is a Priority and Precedency in Chriſt's relation; not for dignity only, but for cauſality too: our Son-ſhip depends upon Chriſt's Son-ſhip; *We are adopted in him,*

A *him*, he merited it, and purchaſed it for us. *He made us accepted in his well-beloved*, Epheſ. i. 6. Our inheritance depends upon his being Heir. St. *Peter* tells us, we *are begat to this heavenly inheritance by the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 3. Amongſt men, 'tis the death of the eldeſt Son, that makes the younger children become Heirs; but here 'tis the Reſurrection of Chriſt our Elder Brother, that gives right to our Inheritance. The Husbandmen ſay in the Goſpel, *This is the Heir, let us kill him, and the inheritance ſhall be ours*: They think to inherit heaven by Occupancy. No, 'tis quite contrary here, Chriſt, the Heir of all, is revived, and aſcended; therefore the Inhe-
B ritance ſhall be ours.

For Uſe of all: *Is Chriſt aſcended into heaven?*

Firſt, Let's Worſhip him, now he ſits on his Throne. The Diſciples when they ſaw him taken up into heaven, 'tis ſaid, *they worſhipped him*, Luke xxiv. 52. When *Solomon* was placed on his Fathers Throne, all the Kings ſervants came and did their homage to him.

Secondly, Is he advanced to the right hand of God? Let's rejoyce in his glory: When *Solomon* was crowned, all the People *ſhouted for joy*; *Behold, the Crown which is Solomons, with which his father hath crowned him in the day of the gladneſs of his heart*. Let Satan and his
C Inſtruments, like *Adonijah* and his Complices, flie and hide themſelves for fear; but let the hearts of them rejoyce that love the Lord.

Thirdly, Is he now at the right hand of God? make uſe of this his advancement. When *Elias* aſcended up to heaven, what was the ſuit that *Eliſha* made to him? *O, that a double portion of thy Spirit may reſt upon me*. Many of us ſnatch at his Mantle, wear his Livery, take up the Profeſſion of Chriſtians, but heed not his Spirit. What ſaith *Paul*? *If any have not the Spirit of Chriſt, the ſame is none of his. If we be Sons, God will ſend the Spirit of his Son into our hearts*. He is entred into heaven as our Advocate and Interceſſour, commend thy Cauſe to
D him; ſend up thy Petitions, he is the great Maſter of Requeſts, he is able to ſpeed all our Petitions. In all thy neceſſities and diſtreſſes, call upon him, as *Hezekiah* did in his diſtreſs, LORD, *I am oppreſſed, undertake for me*.

Fourthly, In our departure out of the world, imitate him in his leaving of the world.

I. Be able to ſay, *Aſcendo*; that's a Speech of Certainty: be ſure thou knoweſt whither to go, that it is an Aſcenſion, a going up to heaven. Alaſs! how many men die, that know not whether their Spirit goes upwards, or downwards, as *Solomon* ſpeaks; *Paul*'s aſſurance
E ſhould be the aſſurance of us all; *We know when this Tabernacle is diſſolved, we have an houſe in heaven*.

II. Let it be *Aſcendo*, an act of Preparation. Chriſt was upon his aſcent, even before he aſcended, in thought, in preparation; ſo ſhould we do, to die daily, to aſcend daily: *Seek thoſe things that are above, where Chriſt ſits on the right hand of God*. Let your converſation be ſtill in heaven before-hand. He that's to remove to another houſe, will often go thither, fit and prepare it. III. *Aſcendo*,

Sermon I.

III. *Aſcendo*, that's a Voluntary act; 'twas not a rapture, but a free and voluntary motion: Such let our departure be; not dying out of neceſſity of Nature; content to die, becauſe we can live no longer: but willingly embracing, and welcoming death, yielding up our Spirits, offering up our Souls, *O, when ſhall I appear before the preſence of God!* A

IV. Our *Aſcendo* muſt be in *actu fidei*, to our Father, make ſure of that, that thy Faith lay hold of that bleſſed relation. *I know whom I have truſted: I go to my Father's houſe; Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.*

V. Our Aſcent muſt be in the Profeſſion of Chriſtian community, *My God*, and *your God:* Die in the holy communion of Saints. Happy Chriſtian, that lives and dies in the peace of the Church, in the fellowſhip of Believers; that departs out of the boſom of the Church his Mother, to enter into the boſom of God his Father. B

VI. Our Aſcent muſt be *in actu Charitatis*. Chriſt aſcending owns thoſe that had wronged him, and forſaken him, for his Brethren; forgives all unkindneſſes. Be ſure to imitate his Aſcenſion in this too. Let that Charity, which then is the reigning Grace, have a perfect work in thee; forgive all, embrace all with love and charity.

VII. Our Aſcent muſt be *in actu Conſolationis*. Chriſt ſends Meſſages of comfort to his Diſciples; ſo ſhould a dying Chriſtian miniſter words of comfort, and counſel to all about him. Speak the Language of heaven, when thou art going to heaven. C

D

THREE

E

THREE

SERMONS

PREACHED

UPON

Whit-Sunday.

ON WHIT-SUNDAY.

The First Sermon.

LUKE xi. 13.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

IF we cast back our eyes to the former Verses, we shall find in the Context a gracious Encouragement of Christ to his Disciples, and in them to the whole body of the Church, to quicken and stir them up to the exercise of Prayer, the unfolding, and representing of all their wants, and desires before the Throne of Grace to be supplyed and fulfilled.

Indeed were we well acquainted with the Nature of this Duty of Invocation, did we throughly consider,

First, The great Use and Necessity of it, it is the Lock and Key of Heaven, *Condus & Promus cœli*, it opens to us all the rich Store-houses of God's rich mercies, 'tis *situla gratiæ*, (as *Bernard* terms it) that, by which we draw water out of the wells of Salvation. Without it, we are no better then Intruders upon any blessing. Or,

Secondly, Did we consider the great Honour and Dignity it puts upon us, it gives us free access into the Presence of God, it maintains an holy intercourse and communion 'twixt us and Heaven. Or,

Thirdly, Did we consider the sweetness and comfort that arises from it, it mitigates our sorrows, settles and composes our distractions, ravishes our spirits with joy unspeakable and glorious: Were these well thought on, we should think there were little need to enforce the Duty upon us, or to quicken us to it.

But then, on the contrary, when we consider,

F'rst, The great Alienation and Estrangement of our Souls from God

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F'rst, The great Alienation and Estrangement of our Souls from God

Sermon I.

Secondly, Our ſecret Guiltineſs and miſ-giving Thoughts, that make us ſhie to come into his preſence.

Thirdly, The Dulneſs and Liſtleneſs of our hearts to perform any ſpiritual ſervice; we all ſay, *O what a wearineſs is it to ſerve the LORD!* Mal.i. 13. Or,

Fourthly, Our Infidelity and inbred Atheiſm, that makes us think there is no profit in it, that our Prayers vaniſh in the air, and God regards them not.

Theſe things conſidered, we all ſtand in need of the moſt earneſt Incitements and Provocations to it, and Chriſt doth it accordingly.

Firſt, It is no ſmall encouragement for us, *Quòd docet*, that he here preſcribes us a Form of Prayer, *Ver.*2. a great favour, no doubt, though the World grows weary of it. We know not what to ask; but he himſelf teaches us, frames our ſupplication, that it might be accepted. Should a King draw a Petition for a poor Suppliant, to be put up to himſelf, 'twere a ſign he would grant it.

Secondly, Here is a further encouragement, *Quòd dirigit*, He teacheth us not only what, but how to pray, directs in what manner to commence our ſuit, ſo to pray, that we may be ſure to ſpeed. Without this ſecond, though the matter be good, yet if we fail in the holy manner, it may be unſucceſsful. *O quàm negare non vult, qui ſibi qualiter extorquere poſſis oſtendit!* ſaith the Father, Fervently, conſtantly, confidently, are the three Qualifications of our Prayers, that Chriſt directs us to.

Thirdly, *Quòd hortatur*, that's a great Encouragement. He is earneſt in perſwading, and exhorting to this Duty. *Be of good comfort, for he calleth thee*, Mark, x. 49. Nay, more then ſo, he invites and perſwades thee; *Hortatur, ut petas; & negabit quod petis?* ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. *Let me ſee thy countenance, let me hear thy voyce*, ſaith Chriſt to his Church: *for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely*, Cant.ii. 14. Surely he will never deny thee, that doth ſo lovingly perſwade thee to ſeek unto him.

Fourthly, But then the main Encouragement is the great Aſſurance he gives us, that our Prayers ſhall be accepted; nay, they ſhall be granted, nay, more then ſo, they ſhall be rewarded.

I. *Acceptatio*, that's one encouragement. 'Tis comfort to know, that this ſervice is *officium Deo gratum*; that God takes it in good part, that we pray unto him, that he deſpiſes not our prayers, but graciouſly rewards them.

II. *Impetratio*, He not only likes them, but yields to them, fulfills our deſires, ſubſcribes, and ſigns our Petitions; puts them not off with bare good acceptance, but anſwers them all, and fully ſatisfies them.

III. *Remuneratio*, over and above, he rewards them. *Pray to thy Father in ſecret, and he ſhall reward thee openly*, Matth. vi. 6. He gives us more then we ask, even becauſe we ask. He doth not only regard us, but relieves us; nay, over and above, rewards us, when we pray unto him.

The Text then, 'tis a gracious Aſſurance, that Chriſt gives to his Church,

A Church, that they ſhall ſpeed in their Prayers, that they put up unto him. And this Aſſurance 'tis as ſtrong as can be;

Firſt, 'Tis not a bare intimation, or hopeful inſinuation, that we are like to ſpeed; like that half promiſe, and hint of hopes in *Zeph.* ii. 3. *Seek ye the* LORD; *it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the* LORD'S *anger*; or as that of *Joel* ii. 14. *Turn to the* LORD; *Who knows, but he will return, and repent, and leave a bleſſing behinde him?* Not only ſo; nay,

Secondly, This aſſurance here, is not a full and abſolute Promiſe only, that God will hear, and be gracious, (though that be much; give faith but a Promiſe from God, and it will work wonders, but) the aſ-

B ſurance in the Text, 'tis *Certitudo per argumentum*, Chriſt proves it, and confirms it to us by dint of argument, and demonſtration. He contends and diſputes with our infidelity and doubting; ſo that, if we have any faith, or reaſon, or ſenſe almoſt, we cannot gain-ſay it. *Come, Let's reaſon together*, ſaith God in *Eſai. Securum me facis, quia dixiſti; quantò ſecuriorem, quia probaſti?* What *Tertullian* ſpeaks of God's ſwearing to us, we may well ſay here of Chriſt's proving and arguing with us; *O nos beatos, quorum causâ Chriſtus arguit! O nos miſeros, qui Chriſto arguenti non credimus!* Happy men, that we are, for whoſe aſſurance Chriſt will argue thus; and wretched men ſhall we be, if,

C when Chriſt thus argues with us, we will not yield to him.

Now the Argument, which Chriſt uſes here, it is fitted and accommodated to our reaſon and apprehenſion. 'Tis framed by way of ſimilitude: A double ſimilitude.

Firſt, Chriſt argues *à ſimilitudine Amici*, Verſ. 5. and that's hopeful. *Which of you ſhall have a friend, and ſhall ſay unto him, Do this for me* —— Friendſhip called upon by importunity, and that ſtirred up by neceſſity, admits no denial. What friend ſo faithful, loving, helpful to his deareſt friend, as God to us? *Ye are my friends*, ſaith Chriſt, *John* xv. 14. *Abraham* was called *the friend of God*, James ii. 27. That's

D a good argument, an hopeful aſſurance. But yet may be a doubting faith thinks it not ſo clear and convincing; friendſhip may be forfeited, and grow cold, and break off: Chriſt therefore uſes a ſecond and more enforcing Argument.

Secondly, Argues *à ſimilitudine Patris. Which of you, that is a father, can deny his Childe any thing?* Suppoſe a friend ſhould prove unkind to his friend; yet a father will not be unnatural to his childe. *Friget Amicitia præ viſceribus paternis*; the boſom of a friend is nothing ſo affectionate and tender, as the bowels of a father. Now God is not our friend only, but our father alſo. What can Infidelity object againſt

E this aſſurance? *If you that be evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much* ——

So then in this Diſcourſe of Chriſt, we may obſerve theſe three Particulars:

Firſt, Is the Proof or Argument which our Saviour uſeth, that's in the Similitude; *If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children.*

Secondly,

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Secondly, Is the Concluſion, that's drawn from that Argument; *Your heavenly Father ſhall give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* A

Thirdly, Is the Illation or Inference of the Concluſion out of the Argument: that's *In quanto magis*, How much more. So that,

First, Here is the Propoſition of the Similitude in the Argument.

Secondly, Here is the Reddition and Application of it in the Concluſion.

Thirdly, Here is the Proportion and Degree of the Similitude in the Illation; *How much more.* The.

First thing obſervable is the Argument or Similitude; and of it we may take a double view. B

First, We will conſider *rem ſubſtratam*, the Matter it ſelf of the Similitude: and in the next place,

Secondly, We will conſider the Uſe and Improvement, that Chriſt makes of it.

First, The Matter of the Similitude, that's in theſe words, *Ye that are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children.* And in it are couched three Truths ſuppoſed by our Saviour.

I. The firſt Truth ſuppoſed is, *Vos eſtis mali*, You, all the ſort of you; here is your ſtate and condition, *Ye are all evil.*

II. A ſecond Truth ſuppoſed is, *Vos mali noſtis bona facere*; you C know how to do ſome things that are good & commendable; and then,

III. A third Truth ſuppoſed is, *Vos mali noſtis benefacere liberis*; You that are evil, have this good Principle preſerved in you, you know and deſire to do good to your children.

I. *Vos eſtis mali*, that's the firſt Suppoſal; You are all evil. And 'tis no light taſte or tincture of evil, that Chriſt objects to them; no, 'tis ὑμεῖς πονηροὶ, that points out the very dregs and ſink, and ſediment of evil, that is ſtill within them. And who were they? Some Godleſs and profane, and notorious Ones of the world, ſinners of the firſt Magnitude, murdering *Cain*, and rebellious *Abſalom*, and trayterous *Judas*; D this Title ſits cloſe to them, we all yield ſuch to be wicked men. Nay; not only theſe, but the more reſtrained, and well-ordered men, thoſe that are free from groſs pollutions, and criminal ſtains, for humane converſation inoffenſive, yet this Title of πονηροὶ reaches them too; none of them free from this imputation, no, not one. Nay, the men that Chriſt ſpeaks to, were far beyond theſe.

1. They were his own Diſciples, Ver. 1. Men, that had put themſelves under Chriſt's Doctrine and Diſcipline. More then ſo;

2. They were men Regenerate, ſuch, as might call God Father, ſuch E as God did own for his children: He acknowledges himſelf their heavenly Father; *Quos filios Dei dicit, eoſdem malos dicit*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. Nay;

3. They were very devout and religious men, they ſued to Chriſt to be taught to pray and call upon God, men given to devotion. Expoſitours take them to be the Apoſtles, *Fructus centeſimi Chriſtiani*, as the Father ſpeaks, of the beſt ſort, ſuch as brought forth an hundred fold.

Yet

A Yet notwithſtanding all that dignity of Apoſtleſhip and priviledge of Sonſhip, and progreſs of piety and devotion, *Quamvis Patriarchia ſit, quamvis Propheta, quamvi Apoſtolus, dicitur iis à Domino, Si vos, cùm ſitis mali*, ſaith St. *Hierom.* Chriſt tells them what they are, and what they muſt judg themſelves to be. There is that in them, that juſtly faſtens upon them this imputation; *Eſtis mali*, Ye are evil and ſinful.

It muſt put us all, the beſt of us to the bluſh, and make us cry out, *We are unclean, we are unclean.* It will teach us to take up St. *John*'s confeſſion, and ſay with ſorrow and ſhame, *If we ſay, We have no ſin, there is no truth in us.* And that ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, was no complemental

B ſpeech of humility, as *Pelagius* did blanch it, *Non tantùm humiliter, ſed & veraciter ſe dicit peccatorem. If we ſay, We have no ſin*, he doth not ſay, *Non eſt humilitas in nobis, ſed non eſt veritas in nobis*; 'tis not want of Humility, but want of Truth too, to ſay, *We are no ſinners.* As *Chryſoſtom* obſerves of *Paul*'s Confeſſion, that he was *not worthy to be an Apoſtle*, it was not a fit of Humility, but a pang of conſcience that moved him to that confeſſion. Why ſo? he goes about to prove it, ſaith he, *Becauſe I perſecuted the Church of God.* Humility may ſay it, but 'tis conſcience and compunction, that makes him thus ready and forward to prove it.

C How then are theſe Diſciples ſaid to be *evil*?

(1.) 'Tis not *conditione naturæ*, not in reſpect of their firſt Creation; as the *Manichees* expounded and perverted this Text. Their natural and ſubſtantial condition was not evil, or wicked. τὸ πονηρὸν is not οὐσία, but διάθεσις, ſaith St. *Baſil*: *Sin is not a ſubſtantial, but a morral corruption.* The good God made all things very good, we came all pure and unſpotted out of his hand.

(2.) They were ſo not *totali corruptione*; it implyes not a total, complete corruption. Their orignal, 'twas much purged and healed, and a ſeed and principle of goodneſs and ſanctity infuſed into them.

D (3.) They were not evil and wicked, *æſtimatione divinâ.* God accounts otherwiſe of his children then of wicked men. *Their ſpot is not the ſpot of his children. He hath not ſeen iniquity in* Jacob. The evil which he ſees in them by the diſcerning eye of his Knowledge, even that he ſees not with the revenging eye of his Juſtice. They are Saints by calling, waſhed, and cleanſed, and accepted in his ſight.

How far forth then are they called *evil?*

1. They are ſaid be evil, *Reliquiarum malignitate.* In the holieſt men there are ſtill the reliques and remainders of much ſinful corruption. The *Jews* report, that when *Noah* ſent forth his Sons to peo-

E ple the World, he delivered to every one of them λείψανα, *Admai*, ſome reliques of old *Adam.* It may be fabulous for the Hiſtory, but 'tis true in the Morality; The reliques of his ſinful corruption cleave too cloſe to us. 'Tis not here his Head to one, his Hand to another, as in the Story; but all the Members of old *Adam*, the whole body of ſin is remaining in us, we carry it about with us; *In optimis nonnihil eſt peſſimi*, ſaith the Father. Our original ſin is perfectly pardoned

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doned, but yet imperfectly purged. In our regeneration we are freed, *à morte peccati*, but not *à morbo peccati*; recovered from the death of sin, but not from the disease of it. Those same *panni menstruati*, that *Esai* complains of, the defilements of our Conception and Birth sin stick still upon us. "*Adam*'s fall, saith *Bernard*, cast us not only into a "puddle of mire, which did pollute us; but upon an heap of stones, "that did bruise and maim us. Till those maims are recovered, we are still liable to this title of shame, *Est is mali*, You are evil and sinful.

2. They are said to be *Evil*, *Primitiarum imperfectione*. The good that is in us by our New-birth, 'tis evil and imperfect, so enfeebled by the resistance and conflict of corruption, that justly we deserve to be called *evil* and *sinful*. There is in us that *civile bellum interiorum affectionum*, as St. *Augustine* terms it; or, as elsewhere he calls it, that same *rixa & jurgium inter carnem & spiritum*; *Hannah* and *Peninnah*, under the same roof, vexing each other; *Hagar* insulting over *Sarah*, the bond-woman over the free; *Ishmael* over-topping of *Isaac*; *Esau* in the womb of Grace struggling with *Jacob*; the House of *Saul* still quarrelling and contending with the House of *David*; and thereby encreasing our sin and miseries. *Imperfectum meum viderunt oculi tui*. The best men find and feel, and sigh at these corruptions. Even they, that are clean, are not all clean, they had need wash their feet, *Joh.* xiii. *In bono itinere pulverem colligis*, saith St. *Bernard*. They that choose their way, and pick their steps, yet their feet gather soil and defilement. *Purge out the old Leaven, as you are unleavened*, 1 Cor. v. 7. Unleavened they are, and yet old leaven to be purged out.

3. They are said to be *Evil*, *factâ cum Deo comparatione*. Christ puts us here into a compare with God His goodness in himself, and his goodness to us. In compare with him, the most eminent Saints are nothing but corruption. "*Cujus participatione sumus justi, ejus comparatione sumus injusti*: That sanctity, we have by participation from him, will appear no sanctity in comparison with him. The *Stars are unclean in his sight*, and he *finds fault in his Angels*. The infinite splendour of his holiness turns the *Sun into blood*, the *Moon* into *sackcloth*, and the *Stars with-draw their light*, when *he shines forth*. One view of God's holiness made *Abraham* moulder away into dust and ashes. One glimpse of this Glory makes *Esai* cry out, *Wo is me, I am undone, I have seen the Lord. I have seen thee with mine eyes*, saith *Job*; *therefore I abhor my self in dust and ashes*.

That's the first Truth supposed, *Vos estis mali*, Ye are evil and sinful.

II. A second Truth supposed is, *Mali nôstis bona facere*. Though by nature you are evil and sinful, tainted with corruption, yet, even in that decayed condition there are some remainders of right reason, some impressions of equity, some Principles of common honesty, that are preserved in you. Nay they that are *evil*, not partially only, as these to whom Christ speaks, but totally and compleatly, no way changed or bettered, yet have some Truths inbred in them, some prints of good-

ness

A neſs engraven upon them. The Image of God, in which we were created, is not wholly defaced: As he ſaid of a great Wit miſcarried, there are *veſtigia magni, ſed neglecti ingenii*; ſome lineaments of that goodly portraiture in which we were framed.

Indeed our ſpiritual endowments, they are totally loſt; all, in reſpect of them, are become abominable: but the natural part, in ſome moral Principles is ſtill abiding in us. The Soul is like ſome plundered Palace, the plate and the hangings, and all the rich furniture, all carryed away; but yet ſome of the Fabrick is left ſtanding ſtill. Theſe remainders of reaſon, they are like *Job*'s Meſſengers, that *eſcaped with their*
B *lives*, when the reſt were deſtroyed: Thoſe glimmerings of Truth, as a few dim Stars appearing in a dark night. Doth not Nature teach us to deal juſtly with all men? Doth it not ſtartle and ſhrink back, and look ghaſtly at ſome abominations? The Dictates of Morality that were ſtamped upon our Souls, though much dimmed and darkened, do yet remain legible in our ſouls and conſciences. Even an unregenerate conſcience, it will check and give back at ſome groſs impieties; it will chear and encourage us in our honeſt practices. Virtues without grace are no better then Vices, little indeed for ſpiritual purpoſes. The remainders of Nature are in themſelves unprofitable: *Sine Chriſto, omnis*
C *Virtus in vitio eſt*, ſaith St. *Hierom*. No ſaving Truth is known but by Revelation. *Cui veritas cognita ſine Deo? Cui Deus ſine Chriſto?* ſaith *Tertullian*. In point of ſalvation they fail and fall ſhort, but yet in civil and humane reſpects, they are uſeful and commendable.

Theſe natural endowments are ſome wayes beneficial.

1. *Innocentiùs vivunt*. They that croſs not theſe dictates of Nature, but obſerve and obey them, they live more innocent and unblameable, and ſo are more commodious, and uſeful to mankinde. God purpoſely left them in us to keep and uphold ſome order in the world. As *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he carryed the Princes, and chief men into captivity,
D left ſome of the People behinde to till the Land, leſt it became a Wilderneſs; ſo theſe impreſſions of Nature are continued in us to civilize, and cultivate the Sons of men. Did not the Principles of Morality bear ſome ſway in mens lives, the World could not ſubſiſt, common juſtice and honeſty would not be maintained.

2. *Temporaliter remunerantur*. Though they cannot avail to procure Grace and Salvation (you can carry the water no higher then the Fountain-head is; Nature works not beyond its own ſphere) yet God vouchſafes them ſome temporal rewards. Thus (ſaith St. *Auguſtine*) *the* Romans *for their Juſtice and Temperance wherein they did excel,*
E *were rewarded by God with Victory and Proſperity*.

3. *Mitiùs puniuntur*. They that live according to theſe Dictates of Nature, and Rules of right Reaſon, though for want of Chriſt, they fall ſhort of heaven, yet, their account will be more eaſie. Such ſhall have a more tolerable damnation. The *Heathen* and all *the People that know not God, are all turned into Hell*; but yet *Cato* ſuffers leſs then *Catiline*; *Socrates*, then *Nero*.

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4. *Propriùs abſunt à ſalute.* The Converſion and ſalvation of ſuch men, 'tis more eaſie and hopeful. Theſe remainders of Reaſon and Morality, they are ſtocks, upon which Grace and Religion are more kindly engraffed. Nature at the beſt, 'tis but a Crab-ſtock, brings forth no fruit to eternal life; but graff Grace upon it, and it will fructifie to ſalvation. Civil honeſty hath a more kindly change into piety and ſanctity, then unnatural debauchery. A ſober, a peaceable, an humble man in the ſphere of Morality is more eaſily converted, is not ſo far off from the Kingdom of God, as thoſe out-ragious wretches, that ſin againſt Nature. That's the ſecond Truth ſuppoſed.

III. A third Truth ſuppoſed is, *Mali nôſtis benefacere liberis.* Amongſt the ruins and rubbiſh of decayed Nature, this Principle God hath kept and preſerved. Even Godleſs men have this impreſſion in them, to love their Children, to ſeek their well-fare, and to do good unto them *You that are evil, know how to give good things to your children.* God hath planted this ſecret and forcible inſtinct in the bowels of all men. Πᾶν γὰρ φιλότεκνον, ſaid the Heathen Poet. No Nation ſo barbarous, but their bowels are tender to the fruit of their body. This Principle is preſerved, ὡς μαργαρίτης ἐν σωρῷ, as a precious ſtone in a heap of mire. Some other Principles have but *reliquiæ tenuiſſimæ impreſſionis* (as *Pariſienſis* ſpeaks) are but dark and dim in the ſouls of men: This Propenſity of Nature, it is ſtrong and vigorous. God's love to mankinde, was careful to preſerve this tender affection, and he is well-pleaſed with it. *In alio ſua quemque natura delectat.* 'Tis his great and gracious work to do good to mankind. 'Tis ſaid of Phyſitians, but it is moſt true of God, Τὸ θεῖον τὸ ἐπὶ τῷδε φιλάνθρωπον, He delights to be called *The preſerver of men.* He hath provided for this ſweet diſpoſition in our firſt original: He made us all of one blood; created not men as he did the Angels *ſeorſim*, ſeveral and independent one from another; but multiplyed mankinde by propagation from one original root, and the ſap of the root is this kindly affection.

This Storge and natural affection, 'tis many wayes uſeful.

1. 'Tis *Glutinum Naturæ*; 'tis the glue and ſoader that cements the World, and holds it together. Mankinde would periſh and decay, did not this bond of Nature joyn us cloſe together.

2. 'Tis *Vehiculum Diſciplinæ.* This love of Parents to their children, 'tis the moſt kindly conveyance of Nurture and Diſcipline. Thus *Wiſdom* in the *Proverbs*, when it teacheth her Scholars, takes upon her the Perſon of a Father, and a Mother; *My Son, hear the Inſtruction of thy Father, and forſake not the Law of thy Mother. What my Son? and what the Son of my Womb? and what the Son of my Vows?* How forcible are theſe perſwaſions to Piety and Virtue?

3. 'Tis *Calcar Induſtriæ.* This love of Parents to their Children, to provide for them is the great Spur and Incitement to Labour and Induſtry. The Labour of men, 'tis not all for the belly, 'tis moſt for their bowels, to provide for poſterity. *Fathers* they *lay up for their children*, ſaith St. *Paul.* The Plummet that keeps that ſame τεῖχος γενέσεως, the

A the Wheels of the World in the continual motion, is this *pondus naturæ*, this sway of Affection, that they *may leave their Riches and substance for their Babes.*

4. 'Tis *Condimentum Moleſtiæ.* This tender Affection sweetens all that toyl, that's incident unto Parents: the pains of bringing forth, and the care of bringing up, that same τεκτοτοκεῖν, and τεκποφοιεῖν, that St. *Paul* speaks of, 'tis an easie burthen to this loving Affection. *In hoc aut non laboratur, aut labor ipſe amatur.* The hardest labours are made easie and acceptable by this sweet affection.

5. 'Tis *Incentivum Pietatis*; 'tis an effectual Motive to stir up to
B Piety. *Salvian* presses and enforces this consideration: "Dost thou "love thy Children and tender their welfare? O, then be religious "and devout, so thou shalt transmit a blessing to them. Piety entails "a blessing to posterity: Whereas a wicked man troubles his own house, and conveys a curse to them.

The want of this natural affection St. *Paul* makes a brand of a Reprobate minde, *Rom* i. 31. He foretels it as a prodigy and a sad Prognostick, of the last and worst and most perillous times, 2 *Tim.* iii. 3 then *shall men be without natural Affection.* Amongst that rabble of Monsters, that he there reckons up, he puts ἄστοργοι.

C We have seen the first Thing, *rem ſubſtratam*, the Matter of the Similitude: A word of the second.

Secondly, Of the use and improvement that Christ makes of it. This Similitude God here assumes to himself, offers himself to us in the notion of a Father, to represent his care and regard of us, thinks it not sufficient to acquaint us with the riches of his gracious Providence, that he is our God, and Maker, and Preserver; but delights to speak to us in the most familiar Language of Love, conveys his thoughts to us in these sweet expressions. Indeed, his love in it self, 'tis inconceiveable, it passeth knowledg, *Epheſ.* iii. 19. To make us feel the sweetness of it, he assures
D it to us in the most pregnant and forcible representations.

See that in three manifestations of it;

I. He expresses himself in the most kindly, and comfortable resemblance. Would'st thou conceive his all-seeing Providence always held over thee? He is a Watchman to thee, keeps sentinel, *never slumbers, nor sleeps*; He hath ἀκοίμητον ὄμμα, his eyes are still over thee. Would'st thou apprehend his constant care to feed, and provide for thee? He is thy Shepherd to feed thee and sustain thee. *Dominus exercituum eſt Paſtor ovium.* Would'st thou understand his Tenderness over thee? he resembles himself to the tendereſt Creatures. *As an*
E *Hen gathers her Chickens under her wings: as an Eagle stirs up her Nest, flutters over her young, bears them on her wings: Quaſi Perdix fovet filios, quaſi Gallina congregat pullos, quaſi Aquila provocat ad volandum*; saith St. *Bernard.* All sweet resemblances of his Tenderness over us.

II, He assumes to himself the most endearing Relations.

1. A *Friend*, that's a sweet Relation. Indeed *Ariſtotle* thinks it

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ridiculous to count God our Friend. Yet God ſtoops to that relation. *I have called you my Friends*, Joh. xv. 15. A

2. A *Brother*, that's a loving Relation. He vouchſafes us that reference, *He is not aſhamed to call them Brethren*, Heb. ii. 11.

3. A *Father*, that's a Relation of much love: *I will be a Father to you, and ye ſhall be my Sons, and my Daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty*, 2 Cor. vi. 18.

4. An *Husband*, that's an affectionate Relation, Eſai. liv. 5. *He that made thee, is thine Husband. I have married thee to my ſelf in mercy and loving kindneſs.* Nay, becauſe theſe Relations, ſingle, and apart, fall ſhort, he combines many of them together, twiſts them into one, to make theſe Cords of love the ſtronger. *He that doth the will of my Father, he is my Brother, and Siſter, and Mother. Open to me my Siſter, my Love, my Dove, my Undefiled.* B

III. He takes to himſelf the moſt tender affection:

1. Love and goodneſs, that's a ſweet affection: God is not only loving, but Love it ſelf, 1 Joh. iv. 16. *God is Love.* He is *Amor per eſſentiam*, αὐτο ἀγαθότης, not by a weak derivative participation.

2. Pity, that's a tender, melting affection. *The Lord is very pitiful*, Jam. v. 11.

3. Compaſſion and fellow-feeling of ſorrows, *In all their afflictions he was afflicted*, Eſai. lxiii. 9. His Nature is *impaßibilis*, but not *incompaßibilis*; free from paſſion, but full of compaſſion; and his compaſſion, 'tis in the proper ſeat of compaſſion. *He hath bowels of compaßion.* The Prophet tells of the *yearnings*, and *rollings*, and *ſounding of his bowels towards us.* C

We have done with the Argument, or Propoſition of the Similitude: Now follows the

Second thing, the Concluſion, or Application of it: *Your heavenly Father ſhall give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.*

And in it are three things conſiderable: D

Firſt, The Donour and Benefactour, *Your heavenly Father.*

Secondly, The Gift to be beſtowed, *The Holy Spirit.*

Thirdly, The Perſons, to whom he is promiſed, they are ſuch, as *ask him.*

Firſt, The Donour, *Your Heavenly Father.* And take notice of him in his double Relation.

I. Is that more Myſterious Relation *ad intrà*, God the *Father*, the firſt Perſon in the glorious Trinity.

II. That more gracious Relation *ad extrà*, with reference to us as he is *our Father.* E

The firſt of theſe will give aim for direction, of whom we muſt ask it.

The ſecond will give an hint of encouragement and hope, that we ſhall obtain it.

The firſt, as a Finger, points out to him.

The ſecond, as an Hand, beckons us to him.

I. God

A I. God the *Father*, of him we must seek it. We had need to be set right in this point. We neither know what, or of whom to ask. *Who will shew us any good?* there are the ravings of our unguided wishes. Nay, to ask Grace, or Virtue from God, the Heathen Philosopher thought it ridiculous. *Virtutem nemo unquam acceptam Deo retulit*, saith *Cotta* in *Tully*. Nay, St. *James* tells us, that even Christians themselves are subject to mistake, *Err not, my dear Brethren, every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of Light. Lux, à primo lucido*, of him we must crave it.

Not, but that the two other *sacred Persons* concurr in this work. The B *Holy Ghost* is called *The Spirit of the Son*, Gal. iv. 6. *If any have not this spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*, Rom. viii 9. *Of his fulness we all receive grace for grace.* And this he dispenseth *arbitrio, & non obsequio*, saith the Father, not instrumentally, but by his own Authority. This was signified by that outward Type and Ceremony, which Christ used in giving the Spirit: Joh. xx. 22. *He breathed on them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost. Spiratio* is *ab intrà*, it shewed the Spirit proceeded from him. This Gift of Grace comes too from the third Person of the Holy Trinity. He is both the gift, and the giver also. *All these worketh that one, and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally, as he will,* C 1 Cor. xii. 11. He is διαιρῶν ὁ διαιρέμενον, he himself divides and distributes, and 'tis καθὼς βούλεται, saith *Chrysostom*, ὁ καθὼς προαίρεται, as he will, not as he is enjoyned. *It breaths where it lists*, Joh. iii. 8. The Holy Ghost inspired his gifts, saith St. *Basil*, αὐθεντικῶς, ὁ λειτουργικῶς; by the sovereign authority, not ministerially.

And yet this gift of the Spirit is ascribed to the Father by most special appropriation. He is called *The Spirit of the Father*, Joh. xv. 26. *the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father.* The gift of this day, called *the promise of the Father*, Luk. xxiv. 49. both in procession, and in mission; his being, and his sending, cometh both from the Father. The D Reason is good, *Pater est fons Deitatis*, he is the fountain and original of the Deity; he communicates it to the Son, and Spirit. Thus Divines compare the Father to the Fountain, from whence the Water springs; the Son to the River and Stream, that flows from this Fountain; the Holy Ghost to the Pool, or Sea, into which both Fountain and River do both run: all one in substance, yet distinctly apprehended by these several notions. Indeed they all concurr in this work of grace. Eph. ii. 18. *Through the Son we have access by one Spirit to the Father.* The Son recommends us, the Spirit conducts us, and the Father receives us.

We have seen him in his first relation, *ad intrà*; that was as a Finger E to point out and direct us. Look upon him,

II. In his other relation *ad extrà*, as he is *our Father*, that's an Hand, that beckons and invites us: These three words, *Your heavenly Father*, afford us three hints of hope, three grounds of encouragement in the address of our Prayers:

1. That's one Encouragement *quòd Pater*, that he is a *Father*. 'Tis *terminus bonitatis*. They that have children, are of more compassion then

Sermon I. then thoſe that have none. A good Argument of his proſperity and inclination to help us.

2. *Quòd Cæleſtis*, that's another Encouragement he is an *Heavenly Father*, that's *terminus potentiæ*; it argues his power and ability, that he can help and ſupply us.

3. *Quòd Veſter*; he is *Your heavenly Father*. We are not forlorn, he doth not caſt us off and abandon us, but own us for his children; that's a term of engagement, it gives us intereſt in his goodneſs and power: we may in an humbly confidence lay claim to them.

And theſe three may anſwer, and ſatisfie three doubts, that a weak Faith may forecaſt it ſelf in praying.

(1.) The firſt doubt is, *Domine, ſi vis*, Mar.i.40. LORD, *if thou wilt, thou canſt make me whole.* Never doubt of that, here is good hope of his goodneſs, he hath the heart and affection of a loving Father.

(2.) A ſecond doubt is, *Domine, ſi potes.* Mar.ix.22. LORD *if thou canſt do any thing, have compaſſion on me*, Never queſtion that; he is an *Heavenly Father*, God all-ſufficient to help and relieve us.

(3.) A third doubt is; *Domine, nonne tibi curæ?* Mar.iv.38. LORD, *careſt thou not, that we periſh?* No, that's anſwered and ſatisfied, *He is your heavenly Father*; his goodneſs and his greatneſs, are both aſſured to us for our good and benefit.

Without theſe encouragements, Infidelity would make us give over our Prayers; either denying his will, with thoſe in *Zephanie*, *The LORD will neither do good, nor evil*; or denying his power, with the Prince of *Samaria*, *If the windows of heaven were open*, he cannot ſuccour us; or, with *Cain*, diſclaiming our Intereſt in him, *I am caſt out from his face*, he will not own us: But all theſe put together, he is willing, he is able, he is engaged to do it: By theſe three immutable things, in which 'tis impoſſible that God ſhould fail, we may have an aſſured hope and ſtrong conſolation.

Well then, this hope we have in the Power: Come we

Secondly, To the Gift to be beſtowed, that's very ſuitable to the Author, and Donour, the *Holy Spirit*. St. *Matthew* expreſſes it in more general terms, Chap.vii.11. *Your Father in Heaven ſhall give good things to them that ask him*; that's proviſion of a larger extent, that ſupplies all our neceſſities, ſatisfies all our deſires and cravings. But yet St. *Luke* here overlooks the reſt, inſiſts upon this one gift, that, which *Pariſienſis* calls *Maximam Eleemoſynam immenſæ miſericordiæ*, the choice gift of God's bounty, his grace and Spirit. And purpoſely and ſweetly are our prayers here limited to the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

That, which a childe ſhould ask of his Father, ſhould have one of theſe three conditions, and they are all eminently in this great gift.

I. It ſhould be *neceſſarium*: A childe ſhould ask of his father that which is neceſſary. Superfluities are not for a Child to ask, nor will a wiſe Father give them. *Superflua non nocent*, ſay the Lawyers in making Conveyances: but in our Prayers and Petitions, they may prove offenſive. Now of all the gifts that we can ask, or God can give, the

A the *Holy Spirit* is of greateſt neceſſity. Chriſt tells us, that in the Similitude, children ask for bread. Bread is not ſo neceſſary for this life, as grace for Salvation. You heard often of *Non in ſolo pane*; bread is not the only ſtaff we lean on. But there is no ſuch exception of grace and ſanctity. Nay, the neceſſities of life are but impertinencies in compare with that *One thing neceſſary*, the grace of God's Spirit: We may ſay of all other diſappointments, as that *Roman* did, *Si non, ego ſum*; and reſolve with our ſelves to make ſhift without them: but fall ſhort of this gift, and we are undone for ever.

II. If a childe crave beyond neceſſity, yet that, which he asks, it
B muſt be *utile*, that which is good and profitable to him. Now this gift of the Spirit, 'tis profitable to all things, moſt uſeful and beneficial.

1. 'Tis *in ſe bonum*, the beſt, the moſt precious gift, that Heaven can beſtow. One grace, one holy inſpiration, the leaſt good motion, one ſigh, or groan to God-ward, is of an higher price, more to be valued, then the wholv World beſide.

2. *Facit bonum.* Grace, 'tis ſuch a gift, as alwayes makes him good that hath it. *Ariſtotle* tells us, that *Virtute nemo malè utitur.* That's truly good that cannot be abuſed. And 'tis one of his Topicks, *Quæ ſunt melioribus propria, videntur eſſe meliora.* Grace, 'tis
C the good man's portion, and it makes him good. But temporal things are not of that virtue; a man may have thoſe goods, and not be good himſelf. Riches are called Goods, ſaith *Auguſtine*, *Non quòd indè ſis bonus, ſed quòd indè facias bonum*, but the Holy Ghoſt ever makes them good that hath it.

3. This gift, 'tis *fundamentum reliquorum*: 'Tis the pledg and aſſurance of all other gifts. And ſo it takes in St. *Matthew*'s expreſſion. *Chryſoſtom* calls it ἐνέχυρον, ἀρραβῶνα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; 'tis the earneſt for all other gifts and bleſſings. The things of this life are acceſſaries and appurtenances to this great gift, but as the Paper and
D pack-thread, that's given into the Bargain. *The Lord will give grace and glory*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. and other things are but an *&c cætera*. *No good thing will he with-hold.* He that gives thee his Son and Spirit, will deny thee nothing.

That's a ſecond, it muſt be good and profitable.

III. A childe ſhould ask his Father that, which is *Maximum teſtimonium amoris Paterni*, that, which is the ſureſt ſign of his Father's love. Love, in all gifts, it looks at love, and that's the beſt gift, that doth beſt betoken it. Now, above all other gifts, this gift of the Spirit, 'tis the ſureſt ſign, the richeſt evidence, the ſtrongeſt demonſtra-
E tion of God's Love to us. *The Love of God is ſhed into our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, which is given to us*, Rom. v. 5. The greateſt gift that Love can give, is to give himſelf. Now, in giving his Spirit, he gives himſelf to us, *makes us partakers of the divine Nature*, ſaith St. *Peter*; ὁ κολλώμενος τῷ Κυρίῳ, ἓν πνεῦμά ἐστι· it joyns us to the Lord, and makes us one with him.

Other Petitions may be made on by-reſpects, and may ſpeed accordingly;

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dingly; but this for the Spirit is grounded on Love. *Nihil Domine, præter teipſum*, that's Love's Petition. No man prays for the Spirit, but he loves God; and no man receives the Spirit, but God loves him. Oh! theſe Prayers for Grace; *Pardon my ſins*, LORD, *purge out my corruptions, ſubdue my rebellions, quicken my devotions*; *Domine, quas tuorum preces exaudis, ſi has non exaudis?* Aug. Theſe Prayers ſhall ſpeed, though others may fail. The grant of theſe, 'tis *Occultæ prædeſtinationis indicium, futuræ felicitatis præſagium*, ſaith *Bernard*. They are the Tokens of our eternal election, and the foretokens of our future glorification.

To this purpoſe Divines expreſs this communication of the Holy Ghoſt under three Names;

1. He is *Amor Patris*.
2. He is *Donum Patris*.
3. He is *Oſculum Patris*.

} Three ſweet Inſinuations of his good will towards us.

1. He is *The Love of the Father*, in his eternal purpoſes, and preparations of Grace.

2. He is *The Gift of the Father*, in his holy inſpirations and infuſions of Grace.

3. He is *The Kiſs of the Father* in thoſe unſpeakable comforts and conſolations of Grace. In beſtowing of him on us, He deals with us, as the loving Father did with his returning Prodigal; not only receives us, but kiſſes us; not only cloaths us, but adorns us; not only feeds us, but feaſts us; the Kiſs, the Ring, the rich Robe, and the fineſt of fat things, all beſtowed upon us in this gift of the Spirit, Whatſoever belongs to life and godlineſs.

There is yet a third Particular.

Thirdly, The Perſons upon whom this gift is beſtowed, 'tis upon thoſe that *ask him*.

The Correſpondency with the Similitude would have been more expreſs, had it run thus; *He will give the Holy Ghoſt unto his children*: But yet our Saviour frames the reddition in theſe Terms rather, 'tis *to them that ask him*.

I. This expreſſion, 'tis equivalent; 'tis a true and certain deſcription of a Childe of God; he is one that prays to him. Devotion, 'tis *indoles & ingenium Filii Dei*. The Spirit of Adoption is the Spirit of Devotion; firſt vents it ſelf in Prayer and Petition, makes us cry *Abba, Father*. If the new-born child do but cry, 'tis *partus vitalis*, the Inheritance belongs to him.

II. And then this Clauſe, 'tis a neceſſary Condition. This gift, 'tis not *inter miſſilia Fortunæ*, it's no Chance's gift; it muſt be ſought for. In other bleſſings he oft-times kiſſes us ſleeping; but the gifts of grace, are given *vigilantibus, & non dormientibus*; no man enjoys them, but he knows how he comes by them.

But then the Queſtion will be, *How can we pray for the Spirit without the Spirit?* He that prays, muſt pray *by the Spirit*, elſe 'tis no prayer. No man can pray, or ſo much as ſay, *that Jeſus is the Lord*, *but by*

A *by the Holy Ghoſt.* The firſt thirſtings after Grace, St. *Auguſtine* calls it *ſitientis fidei donum.* Hungering and thirſting, 'tis a gift of Grace. Emptineſs is one thing, and Appetite another. 'Twas not the leaſt branch of the Pelagian Hereſie; "That our Prayers muſt prevent the gifts of "grace, and that God expects them before he beſtows his Grace upon "us. No, ſaith *Concilium Arauſicanum, Per invocationem gratia non confertur, ſed ipſa gratia facit, ut invocetur. Thou wilt prepare their heart,* Pſal. x. 17. 'Tis the Spirit that firſt begets our Prayer, 'tis not our Prayer that procures the Spirit. Our Prayer is firſt *deſiderium ex dono,* and then the Spirit is *donum ex deſiderio.* Our acceſs to God by Prayer,

B St. *Chryſoſtom* obſerves, is called by *Paul,* οὐ προσοδος, ἀλλὰ προσαγωγὴ, *not a motion of our ſelves, but as moved by him* οὐκ ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν προσέλθομεν, ἀλλ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ προσκληθέντες. Prayer, 'tis the breathing of God's Spirit within us; now, in breathing, inſpiration, and drawing in of breath, is before expiration, or ſending it out. No man prayes for the Spirit, but he hath the Spirit. *Nullum certius teſtimonium gratiæ, quàm deſiderium gratiæ,* ſaith St. *Bernard.* The deſires of Grace, are ſure ſigns of Grace. As the Rivers, by ſecret paſſages, come firſt from the Sea, then by more open conveyances return thither again.

St. *Auguſtine* reſolves it, *Fides, & non petita, conceditur, ut ei petenti alia concedantur.*

C The firſt motions of Grace prevent our wills, and beget our Prayers; but the after-ſupplies of Grace are obtained by Prayer. Preventing Grace, 'tis the root of Prayer, but ſubſequent grace is the fruit of Prayer. In the firſt gift of grace, he bids himſelf to us, as he did to *Zacheus,* but for after acceſſions of Grace, he looks to be invited, e're he comes unto us. *In prima converſione,* He knocks at our doors, in ſubſequent grace by Prayer, we knock at his door. *Knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you. Satisfie my ſoul in drought, that my ſoul may be as a watered Garden. O turn in my Lord, turn in to me.* In our firſt converſion, we are like the childe in the womb, nouriſhed by

D the Navel, not by the Mouth; but afterwards, like new-born Babes, we muſt crave and deſire our ſpiritual nouriſhment, that we may grow by it. Our Saviour expreſſeth it in two Similitudes. *Matth.* xiii. in the 44. *Verſe,* there Grace is *Theſaurus inventus,* 'tis like *a Treaſure, that a man found in the field,* when he little thought of it. But then *Verſe* 45. Grace is *Margarita quæſita,* 'tis as a Merchant, that ſearches for pretious Pearls, it coſts him much pains and travel, e're he can obtain it. *Peto, ut accipiam, & tùm accepero, rurſus peto; quantò plùs bibero, tantò plus ſitio,* ſaith St. *Hierome:* like *Achſah*'s Prayer to her Father *Caleb, Terram ſiccam dediſti mihi, des ſcaturigines aquarum.* The thirſtings

E for Grace thou haſt given me, give me alſo the ſprings of Grace and refreſhings.

The Third, and laſt thing remains, that's the ſtrength of the Illation, and in it the proportion of the Similitude, *Quantò magis, How much more?* 'Tis a proportion with advantage.

Firſt, It had been well, if the Argument had held, though with

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some abatement, *à majore ad minus*; if any, the least similitude of a Father's love were in God to us-ward; if but a spark of that affection to such unworthy children of so high a Father; we not worthy, he should own us for children; the place of servants, and the bread of servants, 'tis too good for us. A

Secondly, Or, had the Argument held *à pari*, did he bear but so much love to us, as Parents to their children. *David* sets it that proportion, and took comfort in it, *Psal.* ciii. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* No, this Scripture offers us more grace. Christ frames the Argument, *à minore ad majus*; *Quantò magis*, *How much more?* His love rises here to the high water-mark, like the swellings of *Jordan*, when it over-flows the Banks. Here is full measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, beyond all comparison. Take the Exuberancy of it in these Particulars. B

1. In God there is *Certior notitia*; that's one Exuberancy; if you, that be Fathers, know what's good for your Children, *Quantò magis? How much more* doth the most wise God know what is good for us? Earthly fathers, though never so circumspect and provident, yet may be mistaken, they may give *pro pane lapidem*, *pro pisce Serpentem*; hurt their children, when they mean to help them; Blind *Isaac* may be mistaken; old *Samuel* dispose of Sons in Places unfit for them; the Mother of *Zebedee*'s children may ask she knows not what for them; but our heavenly Father perfectly knows what makes for our welfare. He alwayes hears us *ad utilitatem*. The Church acknowledges this in her Prayers; *God, whose Providence is never deceived, put away from us all hurtful things.* He knows how to order all evils and casualties for our best advantage. C

2. In God there is *plenior sufficientia*, that's a second Exuberancy; He is infinitely more able to supply our necessities. You men are poor, empty, unsufficient Creatures; all your store, 'tis but borrowed bread, *Vers.* 5. The Cruse of Oil may fail; your handful of Meal may be spent. *The children asked for bread, and there were none to give them*, Lam. iv. 4. Nay, the great Master of the Household may be at that exigent, as not to be able to relieve, *If the Lord do not help, how shall I help? out of the Barn-floor, or out of the Wine-press?* 2 Kings vi. 27. said the King himself. But in our heavenly Father's House there is bread enough; he hath abundance of Spirit; the opening his hand fills all with plenty. D

3. In God there is *copiosior bonitas*, that's a third Exuberancy; he is far more bountiful and gracious. *Vos mali, & maligni*; you men, ye are ill, and ill-natur'd, the best of you in compare with him. Even to your children ye oft give grudgingly. *He gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not*, Jam. i. 5. *Honor fontis est magnitudo emanationis*; saith *Parisiensis*: *The plenty and fulness of the stream commends the fountain.* All that goodness which is in men, 'tis but a drop to that Fountain, or Ocean, but as a dust of sand to the whole globe of the earth, E

A earth, as a ſpark to the whole Element of Fire. Your poor bounty is but the duſt of the balance, the drop of the bucket, whereas he is good to all Creatures; *the whole World is full of his goodneſs.*

4. In God there is *auctior paternitas*, that's a fourth Exuberancy. *Vile bodies*, ſaith *Paul*, that's all we have from our earthly Parents; *precious ſouls*, ſaith *Solomon*, thoſe we receive from the *Fathers of Spirits*. In reſpect of our bodies, we may ſay to *Corruption*, *Thou art my Father*, and *to the Worm*, *Thou art my Mother*: but our ſouls, they are Sparks of Eternity. You men are but ſecondary, half-fathers, fathers of the fleſh to your children, he is the Father of Spirits. Here is our
B chief pedigree and deſcent; ἡ ἀρχὴ ἡ Θεὸν ἀγγενῆσαι as *Nyſſen* calls it; that puts a *Quantò magis* upon Gods Paternity. Nay, your children, even when they are yours, are even in that more his then yours. He claims them for his own, *Ezek.* xxiii. 37. *Thou haſt taken thy Sons, whom thou haſt born unto me. Servi, non ſibi, ſed Domino generant*; the children of the *bond-ſervant* are the Maſter's Right. We are born and brought up upon his knees. When ye commend the care of your children to God, you think you do it to a Friend, when 'tis done to a Father; like *Pharaoh*'s daughter, ſhe little thought to put *Moſes* to Nurſe to his own Mother. *Thine they were and thou gaveſt them me*;
C ſo ſaid He, who had not only the breſts of a Nurſe, but the bowels of a Mother. In reſpect of him, *call no man Father*; he is *our Father*, both *in fieri, & in eſſe*, gives us our being, and continues it to us. *Thou art our Father*, *Abraham hath forgot us*, *Iſrael knows us not*, Eſai. lxiii. 16.

5. In God there is *fortior affectio*, that's a fifth Exuberancy. The love of a Father to his childe is but weak, and cold, compared with that love which God bears to us. There is στενοχωρία σπλαγχνων, *ſtreightneſs of bowels*, even in the beſt of you. A Father, nay a Mother, may for-
D get her childe; but his love to us is everlaſting. *Tam Pater nemo, tam Pius nemo.* Earthly Parents beget their children, and then they love them; but God loves his children, and therefore he begets them. His love, 'tis the Principle of our being his children. *Out of his own good will he begat us*, ſaith St. *James*. We had a being in his love, before we had it in our ſelves. But Love in other Parents, 'tis but an after-conſequent of our Generation.

To cloze up all,

This *Quantò magis* on God's part it ſhould be mutual and reciprocal. In all reaſon and equity it exacts the like proportion in us to him-ward. If you, that be children ſtand ſo, and ſo affected to your
E earthly Parents: *Quantò magis*, *how much more* ſhould the ſource and ſtrength of our affections be carryed to our heavenly Father? We muſt not receive with one meaſure, and make our returns to him with another; as if a *quantò magis* on his part ſhould beget a *tanto minùs* on ours; the more abundantly he loves, the leſs he ſhould be beloved of us.

(1.) It muſt ſet a proportion to our Faith and Confidence. If you

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that are children, will rely upon your Parents, *quantò magis*, how much more ſhould we diſburthen our cares upon our heavenly Father! Ask no Queſtion, *What ſhall we eat?* and *What ſhall we drink?* or *What ſhall we put on?* for he cares for us. Other Creatures, they ſhare in his Providence; his ſpecial care, 'tis his childrens portion. *Curam ſibi Eccleſia vendicat.* His children ſhould not truſt to common Providence; but to his ſpecial promiſes and reſt upon them. A

(2.) It muſt ſet a proportion to our Fear and Reverence. If you, that be children, obſerve and reverence your earthly Parents, *quanto magis*, *how much more* reverence ſhould we perform to our heavenly Father? *Filio ſemper honeſta, & ſancta perſona Patris videri debet.* Let the man be what he will be, the name of a Father to his Child is venerable and awful. How dear and dreadful to us ſhould be that glorious name of our heavenly Father? B

(3.) It muſt ſet a proportion to our Love and Thankfulneſs. If you that be children, be lovingly and gratefully affected to your Parents: with what bonds of Love, *quantò magis*, with what ties of thankfulneſs ſhould our hearts be knit to our heavenly Father? Favours from men, they are but *ſcintillæ ignis*, poor ſparks of fire; but the Love of God is *mons igneus*, an huge mountain of Fire to enflame our love to him. Thoſe cold complexion'd Creatures, that are dayly encompaſſed with theſe flames of his love, and not affected with them, they are *Salamandræ Diabolicæ*, ſaith *Pariſienſis*, devilliſh and infernal Salamanders, that live in the midſt of theſe flames of his Love, and are not warmed by them. St. *Paul* calls this proportionable return of love and thankfulneſs, ἀντιμισθία, a juſt recompenſe, 2 *Cor* vi. 13. And his exhortation to it ſhall be our concluſion; *O ye* Corinthians, ſaith *he* (we will take a larger compaſs) *O ye ſons of men, the Heart of our Heavenly Father is enlarged toward us; we are not ſtraitned in him, but in our own bowels. Now, as a recompenſe in the ſame, I ſpeak as unto children, be ye alſo enlarged.* "That ſo approving our ſelves his children here "in the Regeneration, we may be acknowledged for ſuch by him at "the Reſurrection; and be made partakers of that inheritance, of his "faithful, his obedient, his loving, and thankful children, which God "the Father hath prepared, God the Son hath purchaſed, and God "the Holy Ghoſt hath revealed, and aſſured and ſealed up to us. C D

To which three glorious Perſons, but one moſt gracious, moſt wiſe, and immortal God, be given by us, and the whole Church, and by all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, all poſſible praiſe and thankſgiving, and adoration, from this time forth, and for evermore. Amen. E

ON

ON WHIT-SUNDAY,

The Second Sermon.

St. JOHN xiv. 15, 16.

If ye love me, keep my Commandments:
And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

THE Chapter, 'tis an Adminiſtration of Comfort againſt a preſent ſorrow that befell the Apoſtles. Our Saviour had forewarned them of his leaving the World, and departing from them. The loſs of his preſence did much perplex them; that *the light of their eyes*, the *breath of their noſtrils*, the *joy of their hearts*, muſt be taken from them, could not but be grievous to them; *Their hearts were troubled at it*, Verſe 1. Our Saviour, to eaſe, and chear up their drooping ſpirits, affords them a plentiful comfort againſt this ſorrow, by aſſuring them a threefold ſupply of his bodily preſence.

I. The firſt is the ſupply of Faith, *Verſe* 1. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me:* as if he had ſaid; "All that comfort which my "bodily preſence affords to you, Faith in me, when I am gone from "you, ſhall ſupply to you. From a true Believer Chriſt is not abſent, but alwayes preſent to him. *Faith*, 'tis *the evidence of things not ſeen.* But from an unbelieving man Chriſt is abſent, even when he is preſent. *The light ſhined in the darkneſs, but the darkneſs comprehended it not*; but Faith preſents him to the ſoul of a Chriſtian, even when he is abſent. The multitude may throng him; but 'tis only Faith that toucheth him. It enters into Heaven, and there converſes with him. As an Optick-glaſs makes remote things ſeem preſent to us; ſo Faith's Proſpective looks up into Heaven, and there he holds, and enjoyes our Saviour; *in whom, though you ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*, 1 Pet. i. 8.

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II. A ſecond Supply, that Chriſt directs them to, is the ſupply of Prayer, *Verſe* 13. *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask in my Name, I will do it for you:* Chriſt, being preſent with them, made a ſupply to all their wants: and now, that he leaves them, he gives them this aſſurance, that all the comforts they had in his preſence, their prayers unto him ſhall obtain from him. Prayer, 'tis *aſcenſus mentis ad Deum.* By it, the ſoul of a devout Chriſtian aſcends up into Heaven. Wouldeſt thou converſe with thy Saviour? *Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend up into heaven to bring him down to me?* but betake thy ſelf to thy Prayer, and thou art in Heaven. That gives us acceſs to the throne of grace, affords us a ſweet communion with our bleſſed Saviour. A B

III. A third ſupply, which our Saviour aſſures them of, is a ſupply of the Spirit; *the Holy Ghoſt ſhall be ſhed upon them*; and the comforts which he brings with him ſhall ſweeten their preſent ſorrow, overcome their grief, and make them forget it. *The Holy Ghoſt*, ſaith *Tertullian*, 'tis *Vicarius Chriſti.* He is in the Church inſtead of Chriſt. *If any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, ſaith Saint *Paul.* But he that hath the Spirit of Chriſt, he is Chriſts, and Chriſt is his.

1. The Holy Ghoſt works *præſentiam unionis*: by that Spirit, a *Chriſtian* is united to *Chriſt*, as the head and the feet, though ſeemingly diſtant, are all one body, becauſe they are enlivened with the ſame ſoul. And, C

2. The Holy Ghoſt works *præſentiam communionis*; it begets an holy and heavenly intercourſe 'twixt Chriſt and us. We, by our fleſh, which he hath aſſumed, are in heaven with him; and he, by his Spirit, which he beſtowes on us, is on earth with us. Thoſe Graces which his Spirit works in us, are ſo many pledges and love-tokens, which Chriſt ſends to us. That's the ſupply which the Text promiſes; though Chriſt go from them, yet he aſſures them of *another Comforter, that ſhall abide with them.*

The Text then, 'tis a gracious Promiſe which Chriſt makes to his Church, of his beſtowing upon them the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. The firſt evident performance of which Promiſe was as on this Day accompliſhed. Surely, an *exceeding great and precious promiſe* it is, as Saint *Peter* calls it; and accordingly our Saviour makes it unto them with ſome ſolemnity. This Promiſe, 'tis here conveyed unto them by way of compact, and covenant. And, as all Covenants, ſo this here ſtands upon two parts: D

Firſt, There is *Poſtulatum*, ſomething to be done on our part, that may intitle us, and give us right to the benefit of the Covenant; that's expreſſed in the 15. *Verſe*, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*; that's the Duty on our part to be performed. E

Secondly, Then there is *Promiſſum*; ſomething to be done on Chriſt's part, that's the benefit of the Covenant; the good we ſhall get by it; and 'tis the greateſt good we are capable of in this world; 'tis the gracious communion of the Holy Ghoſt. Both theſe, the Duty repreſented, and the benefit of the Covenant of Grace, be of great moment,

A moment, and ſuch as deſerve our greateſt care and attention. And yet, of the two, the Duty moſt concerns us. If we fail not in this, we may be ſure God will not fail us in that Promiſe, but make it good to us.

So then, let us

Firſt, look to the *Poſtulatum*, the Condition and Duty that Chriſt demands of us; that's in theſe words, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*. And here is a complication of two Demands.

Firſt, He requires an obedient Love.

Secondly, He requires a loving Obedience.

B Here is both a Load-ſtone, and a Touch-ſtone.

Firſt, A Load-ſtone, to draw on Obedience, that's Love.

Secondly, Here is a Touch-ſtone to trye, and prove our Love, that's Obedience.

Theſe muſt go together. Love without Obedience, 'tis but Diſſimulation, 'tis not true love; and Obedience without Love, but drudgery and ſlavery, not kindly Obedience. But joyn both theſe together, and we ſhall be rightly qualified, and capable of what Chriſt promiſes, the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt.

Firſt, Come we to the firſt of theſe two, that's expreſſed in this C Clauſe, *If ye love me*. And of this Speech we may take a four-fold conſideration.

I. Look upon the form of it, ſo 'tis a Suppoſition, *If ye love me.*

II. Look to the aim, and intent of it, ſo 'tis a Direction.

III. Look to the nature and kinde of it, ſo 'tis a Qualification.

IV. Look to the ſtrength of it, ſo 'tis an earneſt Entreaty, and paſſionate Obteſtation.

I. For the form of it, 'tis a Suppoſition. And that's in the nature of an Argument, which muſt inferr ſomething upon it. 'Tis in it ſelf but an imperfect ſpeech, it requires ſome inference, that muſt com-D pleat it, and make it full; and that's Obedience; *If ye love me, keep my commandments*. 'Tis not enough then to have the love of Chriſt in our hearts, to bear a loving affection towards him, and ſo reſt in that, proteſting with Saint *Peter*, *Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee*; but our love muſt be teſtified by ſome conſequent fruits of love. Chriſtian Love is no ſtill, ſilent Quality, abiding in the heart only; but 'tis ſtrong, and vigorous, it will finde ſome vent to teſtifie and expreſs it ſelf. *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit*, Gal. v. 25. And ſo this Inference, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*, put's three Conditions upon our Love.

E 1. It muſt be *amor ex officio*, a dutiful Love to Chriſt, ſuch a love, as an Inferiour bears to his Superiour, to him that hath power to command him: So to love him, as that we reverence and honour him, and ſtand in awe of him. The love we muſt bear to Chriſt, is not a love of familiarity, as ſome would have it: Oh, becauſe he loves us, and we love him, therefore lay aſide all reverence, ſhake him by the hand, not bow the knee to him. Chriſt indeed hath vouchſafed to make

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us his brethren, but yet he retains the privilege of birth-right to himself. And what that is, we may see *Gen.* xxvii. 29. *Be Lord over thy brethren, and let thy Mother's sons bow down to thee.* That's the first, 'tis Love *ex officio*, an officious and dutifull Love, a love with reverence, a love of him that is our Commander. A

2. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*; it must be *amor ex præscripto*, that's a second condition. The love we bear to Christ must be such a love, as he requires. We must testifie our love to him, not by tendring to him our own inventions, but by a careful performance of his holy prescriptions. The most voluntary services of our love in Vows, and Free-will Offerings, though they be left to our choice for the act and exercise, yet are they prescribed to us for their kinde and quality. If thou wilt vow any service to thy God, thou must not, like *Jephta*, doe it at all adventures, any thing that comes next to hand; but it must be such a service, as he hath testified will be accepted of him. *Id utique Deo dignum, quod ipse sibi fatetur acceptum.* Otherwise, invent thy work, and seek thy wages. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what the* LORD *requires*, and wherein thou mayest make proof of thy love to him: 'tis not by obtruding thine own devices, but by an obsequious observing his holy Prescriptions. That's the second; 'tis *amor ex præscripto.* B C

3. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*; 'tis *amor in praxi*: that's a third condition of our Love, it must be a practick, and operative, and a working Love. Neither the affection of love in the heart, nor the profession of love in the tongue; but the deeds of love, *the labour of love*, as St. *Paul* calls it, is that kinde of love which Christ sets much by. There are some sweet enjoyments of Love, which a Christian, whose heart is seasoned with the Love of Christ, doth exceedingly delight in, and God doth oft-times afford them to us; but these are rather *præmia* than *officia*, rewards of Love, rather than duties of Love, encouragements of Love, rather than the employments of Love. Christ more requires the works of our hands, than the embracings of our arms. *Probatio dilectionis est exhibitio operis*; Greg. He is the best servant, not that alwayes stands in his Masters presence; but he, that diligently mindes his Master's business. Not waiters, but workers are the best servants. D

That's the first consideration of the Words, as they are a Supposition.

II. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*; Look upon this speech in the aim and intent of it; so 'tis a direction, a rectifying of their Love, and setling of it in a right way. The Disciples hearing that Christ was to leave them, were exceedingly grieved at it; and they thought they could not better make known their love to him, than by desiring him to be alwayes with them, still to enjoy his bodily presence; Christ rejects not their love, but yet he rectifies it; shews them the errour of their love, and how they misplaced it. *Diligebant dulciter, sed non prudenter*, saith *Bernard*. 'Twas an affectionate Love, but incon- E

A inconsiderate. He accepts their affection, but redresses their errour; approves the piety, but redresses the carnality of their Love to him. As Saint *Paul* speaks, *he shews them a more excellent way*, how they should testifie their love to him. Thus, *Verse* 28. he gives their Love a gentle check and reproof: *If ye love me*, saith Christ, *you would rejoyce, because I go to the Father*, and not be sorrowful for parting with me. It was thus with St. *Peter*; he thought he loved and honoured our Saviour, when he would strain courtesie with Christ, not let Christ to wash his feet: *Master, thou shalt never wash my feet*; Christ dislikes not his Love, but shews him his Errour. *If I wash not*
B *thy feet, thou shalt have no part with me.* So *Mary Magdalene* expressed her love and joy to our Saviour, by fastening about his feet after his Resurrection; Christ corrects that errour of her Love, bids her forbear those embracements: *Touch me not, but go to my Disciples*, and tell them the joyful Tidings of my Resurrection. Our humane passionate affections to Christ are no good proofs of our Love to him. Our Spiritual devotion, our Christian conversation, our Dutiful obedience to what he commands, these are the right expresions of our love to him. To these he directs us.

III. *If ye love me* — It points out the Kinde, and just Qualification
C of our obedience, it must be an obedience, that springs from our love to him. 'Tis Love, that breeds true, and Christian obedience. It will add three graceful qualities to our Obedience:

1. It will make it pleasing, and acceptable Obedience.
2. It will make it willing, easie, and chearful Obedience.
3. It will make it lasting, and constant Obedience.

1. Obedience arising from Love, 'tis the only pleasing, and acceptable Obedience. God is a gracious Sovereign, and so will be served, as loving Subjects serve their natural Prince, and not as Slaves and Bond-men do an usurping Tyrant. All other Motives but Love,
D are servile and base, and so beget in us the drudgery of a Slave; not the Duty of a Son.

1. Forbearance from sin, it must be out of the Love of God, or 'tis not accepted, *Tunc vitia victa deputantur, cùm Dei amore vincuntur*; Aug. Then sin is truly mortified, when the Love of God doth mortifie it in us. Fear, that would avoid punishment; but Love is careful to avoid offending. He that fears only, *timet nè pereat*, is afraid of smarting; but he that love God, *timet nè displiceat*, is afraid of offending.

2. Performance of good, that must also be out of the Love of
E God, or 'tis not accepted: *Tunc bonum bene fit, cùm dulcescere incipit.* That's acceptable Obedience, when the sweetness of Love draws unto it, not when we are driven to it by the terrours of Fear. He that doth good out of fear of punishment only, would not do it, if he could escape the punishment he fears. Such Obedience arises out of self-love, not from the Love of God, and so God accepts it not.

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2. This Love of God makes our Obedience, an eaſie, and chearful, and ready Obedience; and ſuch Obedidence it is, that God delights in. 'Tis *David*'s deſcription of an holy man, *Pſal.* i. 2. *His delight is in the Law of God:* More than ſo, *he delights greatly in his Commandments*, Pſal. cxii. 1. Ἀκουσόν ἐστιν ἐπίλυπον, ſaith *Ariſtotle*. Unwillingneſs breeds painfulneſs. *Totum durum eſt, quicquid imperatur invito*; *Salvian*. An unwilling minde accounts every command of God burdenſom; but Love eſteems every Duty light and eaſie. 'Tis a ſhame to talk of hardneſs and difficulty. The ſervice *Jacob* underwent for *Rachel*, 'twas a long, and a laborious ſervice; he endured the heat of the day, the cold and froſt of the night, and that for *ſeven years continuance*, yet it ſeemed but as *a few dayes, becauſe he loved her*, Gen. xxix. 20. *This is the love of God* (ſaith Saint *John*) *that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous*, 1 Joh. v. 3. *I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy Law is within my heart*, Pſal. xl. 8.

3. This Love of God will make our Obedience a laſting, and conſtant Obedience. When we come to this pitch of piety, to ſerve God without ſervile fear, then *we ſhall ſerve him all the dayes of our life*, ſaith holy *Zechary*. Loving Obedience, 'tis laſting Obedience. The ſervant, that ſaith, *I love my Maſter*, will never go from him; he will have his *ear bored*, and will continue a *ſervant for ever*, Exod. xxi. 5, 6. But fear, 'tis a flincher, and will ſoon ſtart aſide; it will make us cry out, like thoſe in *Malachy*, *O what a wearineſs it is to ſerve the Lord!* *Tully* ſaith truly, *Metus haud diuturni officii magiſter*. Service out of fear only, 'tis not long-lived. But love abides for ever, in this ſenſe alſo. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe Love breeds delight, and delight 'tis the true liberty of the ſoul; what a man doth freely, he can do conſtantly. When a man is not reſtrained from what he would do, nor conſtrained to do what he would not do, but from a delightful diſpoſition abhorrs that which is evil, and cleaves to that which is good, that man's Obedience will hold out conſtantly.

That's the third thing, *If ye love me*; 'tis a Qualification.

IV. *If ye love me*; look to the ſtrength of this Speech, and ſo 'tis an Obteſtation, a form of earneſt and importunate entreaty. And that ſhews,

1. The Efficacy of this Motive:
2. The earneſt Affection of him that uſes it.
3. The weightineſs of the Work to which he perſwade tis.

1. The efficacy of this Motive, *If ye love me*; 'tis the moſt prevailing Motive to an ingenuous Nature. *Nihil eſt imperioſius charitate*, ſaith Saint *Hierom*. Love, it's a moſt imperious Commander. Nothing hath that dominion over the Soul, that Love hath. Oh! *the love of Chriſt conſtrains us*, ſaith Saint *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* v. 14. It made him ſtick at nothing, that might teſtifie his love to Chriſt. Upon this Motive Chriſt commends the care of his Church to *Peter*; *Simon Peter, loveſt thou me more than this? feed my Sheep.* 'Twas the Motive that

A that prevailed with *Sampſon* to diſcloſe himſelf to *Dalilah*, though it were to his own hurt and prejudice; *How canſt thou ſay, that thou loveſt me, and doſt not tell me?* That Speech pierced his heart, and he confeſſed all to her, *Judges* xvi. 15, 16.

2. This Obteſtation, *If ye love me*, it ſhews the earneſt affection of him that uſes it. 'Tis an uſual term of ſpeech among men, when we crave ſome good to our ſelves, then we can woo, and ſolicit with this perſwaſion, *If you love me, do this thing for me.* But the thing Chriſt here perſwades to by this earneſt entreaty, is no way beneficial to him, but only to our ſelves. He ſtands not in need of our obedi-
B ence. That God will uſe our ſervice, 'tis *indulgentia*, ſaith *Bernard*, not *indigentia*; a meer vouchſafing of favour to us. As *Auguſtine* alludes to thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, *My goods are nothing unto thee*; tells us, God is the only true Lord and Maſter; becauſe we need him, but he needs not us. Other Maſters need their Servants, as well as Servants need their Maſters. We cannot take up thoſe words of defiance, *I have no need of thee*; but God ſtands in no need of our obedience. Whereas Chriſt ſaith therefore, *If ye love me keep my commandments*, 'tis all one as if he ſaid, *If ye love me, love your own ſouls.* Saint *Hierom* tells us, God therefore commands us, *ut cauſas habeat*
C *remunerandi*, that ſo he may have occaſion to bleſs us, and to doe good to us; otherwiſe he hath no need of our ſervice. When God entertained *Abraham* into his ſervice, and covenanted with him; firſt, he tells him, *I am God All-ſufficient*: God had no need of *Abraham*; but *Abraham* he ſtood in need of God. Like ſome charitable man, that will ſtudy to finde out ſome way to ſet the poor on work, that ſo he might relieve them. How graceleſs a thing will it be in us, ſaith Saint *Hierom*, *ejus reniti voluntati, cujus imperium beneficium eſt?* to diſobey that God, whoſe commands are favours, and all his Injunctions like the Directions of a Friend, or the Preſcripts of a Phy-
D ſician for our health and happineſs.

3. This Obteſtation, *If ye love me*, it ſhews *pondus efficii*, the great weight, and importance of this our Obedience. When we lay this load upon our entreaties, *If ye love me*, we imply the thing we ſue for is a matter of moment. Such is our obedience to God's commandments; to which Chriſt adjures us by our love to him; otherwiſe he would not ſo deeply charge us by ſo ſtrong an engagement. Surely, the feeding of Chriſt's ſheep was no ſlight buſineſs, that might be done, or left undone, when Chriſt urges *Peter* to it, by this Adjuration, *If thou loveſt me.* We may talk of our loving of Chriſt, but Chriſt accounts
E us *his friends* upon no other terms; *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you*, John xv. 14. *Idem velle, & idem nolle, ea demum amicitia eſt.* Conformity in will is the trueſt amity. *Saul*, he would commute his Obedience into a Sacrifice, what ſaith *Samuel? Obedience, 'tis better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, is better than the fat of rams.* Chriſt ſhews us the equity of this his demand of us, *John* xv. 10. *If ye keep my commaudments, ye ſhall abide in my love, as I have kept my*

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Fathers commandements, and abide in his love. He puts no other task upon us, than what he underwent himſelf. Sure, it becomes the ſervant to be as obedient as the Son and heir was. A

We have ſeen the Motive to obedience, Love: Now come to conſider,

Secondly, The Duty to which he moves them, and that's the *keeping of his commandements.* And here, for underſtanding of this, we will make two Enquiries:

I. *Quæ neceſſitas?* What's the Neceſsity of this Duty? why need we perform it?

II. *Quæ poßibilitas?* What is the poſsibility of this Duty? how can we perform it? B

I. *Quæ neceſſitas?* What Neceſsity is there of the Duty? Nay, we are made to enquire by ſome men, how this can ſtand with the ſtate of Chriſtianity, as if that did diſcharge us from obedience to the Law. No, verily: Chriſtianity 'tis no exemption from any moral Duty. Chriſt is not only a Saviour, but a Law-giver: He brings ſalvation, and he requires obedience. St. *Paul* is expreſs againſt this licentious Doctrine, that *Chriſtians are freed from the Law of God:* Rom. iii. 31. *Do we make void the Law through Faith? God forbid; yea, we eſtabliſh the Law.* St. *Auguſtine* makes a circular connexion 'twixt the Law and the Goſpel: *Lex adducit ad fidem*, the Law that ſends us to Faith; *Fides fundit orationem*, Faith that beget's Prayer: *Oratio impetrat Spiritum*, Prayer, that obtains the Spirit: *Spiritus inſpirat charitatem*, the Spirit inſpires Love into us: *& charitas implet legem*, Love, that's the *fulfilling of the Law.* *Tertullian* reſolves this point excellently: *Libertas in Chriſto, non facit innocentiæ injuriam, manet tota lex pietatis & ſanctitatis, in qua lege beatus eſt qui meditatur die ac nocte.* Chriſtian Liberty doth not free us from Moral Duty: the Law of Piety is ſtill in full force, and bleſſed is the man that meditates therein day and night. The ſame Law of God doth ſtill binde us, though not upon the ſame terms, that it doth binde thoſe that are out of Chriſt. C D

II. *Quæ poſsibilitas?* That's a ſecond Enquiry, what poſsibility is there for us to keep them? St. *Paul* tells us of τὸ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου, *Rom.* viii. the impoſsibility of the Law in reſpect of our inability to perform, and fulfill it. Saint *Peter* tells us, the yoke of the Law 'twas inſupportable, *Acts* xv. 10. I anſwer, the Law of God, in it ſelf, is an heavy burthen; but yet an heavy burthen may be made tolerable two wayes, and both of them are here in the Text.

1. Here is that in the Text that doth corroborate, and ſtrengthen us, that's the love of Chriſt, that endues the Soul with much ſtrength. *In amore, aut non laboratur, aut labor ipſe amatur.* Love never complains of labour. Love enables us to labour, to bear, to endure, to ſuffer; *it will bear all things, it will endure all things,* 1 Cor. xiii. 7. E

2. Here is ſomething in the Text that doth alleviate, and lighten this burthen of the Law, that's implied in this word, *Mea, My commandements.* That's both a lightening and a ſweetning word. The Law,

A Law, as enjoyned by *Moſes*, 'tis unſupportable; but, as Chriſt impoſes it in the gracious equity of the Goſpel, ſo 'tis a gentle yoke, an eaſie burthen; *Chriſt* abates the rigour, takes off the terrour of *Moſes* his Law. *Let not God ſpeak to us*; nay, let not *Moſes* ſpeak to us; *leſt we die:* but let Chriſt ſpeak to us. Thus *Auguſtine* prayes, *Legem mihi conſtitue in Chriſto, lex in Chriſto eſt lex cum miſericordia*: The Law from *Sinai*, that's a dreadfull Law; but the Law from *Sion*, that's a gracious Law, when 'tis delivered to us in the hand of ſuch a Mediatour as Chriſt is, with thoſe gracious condeſcenſions to our weakneſs, and merciſull allowances of our imperfections, which the Goſpel af-
B fords us. Though we cannot perform his commandments to a juſt ſatisfaction, yet we may perform them to a gracious acceptation. This made Saint *Paul* ſay, *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, Phil. iv. 13. Through Chriſt abating, and through Chriſt enabling, we may do all things.

We have ſeen the *Poſtulatum*, What Chriſt requires of us:

Come we now,

Secondly, To the Promiſſory part of the Text, what Chriſt aſſures us, he will do for us; *Ego rogabo*: and this is a gracious Motive to quicken our obedience.

C I. He doth not *agere pro imperio*, enjoyn us to keep his commandments upon the Law of Subjection, tells us what we are bound to do, bids us obey, urges our duty upon us, and ſaith no more. *Omnis dominus ſervo monoſyllabus.* Maſters uſe not perſwaſions, or entreaties; but do, or not do, that's the Language of Authority: No, Chriſt's Injunction here, 'tis more gracious; not like *Nebuchadnezzar*'s command to worſhip his new erected god: If you will fall down, and worſhip, well and good; but no promiſe made to their obedience: but if they will not worſhip, he threatens them Fire and Faggot, and the flaming Furnace. And indeed Penalties are the uſual ſanctions of
D mens Lawes, not Hopes and Promiſes.

II. Chriſt alledges not *Quid fecerit*; he tells them not what he hath already done for them, and ſo challenges their obedience by the Law of Gratitude, as a fruit of thankfulneſs for Mercies received; (as indeed, God is always before-hand with us in bleſſings, and may juſtly expect our thankfull obedience for mercies received) but Chriſt tells them here, what he will do for them over and above; for the work of Servants they ſhall have the reward of Sons: *The Father will ſend the Spirit of his Son into their hearts*, to ſupport and comfort them.

So then, the Promiſe that Chriſt made to them, is a gracious promiſe
E of comfort. And in it take notice of theſe four particulars:

Firſt, Here is the Procurer of this Bleſsing, that's Chriſt, *I'le pray for it.*

Secondly, Here is the Authour and Donor of it, that's *God the Father.*

Thirdly, Here is the Bleſsing it ſelf, that's *Another Comforter.*

Fourthly, Here is the Stability of this Bleſsing, *He ſhall abide with you for ever.*

Here

Serm. II.

Here we have the way discovered to us, to get comfort in all our Distresses.

I. Here is the Fountain, and Original of Comfort, that's *God the Father.*

II. Here is the Well-head of Comfort, that's *God the Holy Ghost.*

III. Here is He that draws up these Waters of comfort out of this Well of Salvation, that's *God the Son.* The Well is deep; but *Oratio Christi,* 'tis *situla gratiæ.*

Here are three Comforters, not like *Job*'s three friends, that proved miserable comforters unto him; but all of them Authours of unspeakable comforts. Here is the Grace of Christ, the Love of the Father, the Communion of the Holy Ghost; all of them joyning to comfort his children.

First, The Procurer of this comfort is Christ, by his powerfull prevailing Prayer, and Intercession. And this Promise of Christ, that by his Prayer, he will obtain this Blessing for us, 'tis divers wayes considerable.

I. 'Tis *Ego rogabo, I will pray,* that you may receive the Spirit. He doth not say, *Ego rependam,* I will repay your obedience to my Commandments with this reward, due to your obedience, that you shall receive what you have deserved. No, when we have peformed our best obedience, yet here is all our hope, that Christ will graciously own us; and by his Intercession will commend us, and our obedience to God's free favour, and acceptation. Neither *gaudia patriæ,* nor *solatia viæ,* neither the joyes of Heaven, nor the comforts here on Earth, can be merited by us; but are all obtained for us by Christ's Intercession. The good use of Grace doth not merit the increase of Grace; but only procure it: and that not in its own strength, but in the power and dignity of Christ's Mediation. Here is the state of a Christian's comfort; though our deserts can purchase nothing, yet Christ's prayers can obtain all things for us. Here is the highest improvement of all our obedience, that it qualifies, and makes us capable of the fruit, and benefit of Christ's Intercession.

II. The Promise, 'tis *Ego rogabo, I will pray* for you: He doth not say, *Ego dabo; I will give* you the Spirit of comfort; but *I will pray the Father,* that he will give it you. Not but that Christ is the authour also of all our comforts. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, and this Son, both in his natural procession, and in his gracious and voluntary communication; but yet we see here, our Saviour doth not assume this gift to his own authority; but ascribes it to his Intercession, and prayer to his Father.

1. Here is more grace and dignation in it. It argues more love to supplicate for us, than if he himself were bountifull to us. Many a man will do that for his friend, if it be in his power, which yet he will not sue for, or crave for him at another man's hand. *For your sakes he became poor,* saith St. *Paul:* 'Tis true in this sence also; He hath put himself into the low condition of a suppliant, and suiter to his Father in

A in our behalf. *Preces deſcendit in omnes.* 'Tis more for Chriſt to be a Petitioner for us, than a Benefactor to us.

2. This form of expreſsion, 'tis more comfortable to us, in that it makes our comfort to be the fruit of his Mediation. As he is God, *nec habuit cauſam orandi, nec affectum orandi*, ſaith *Auſtin.* The Divinity of Chriſt cannot be ſaid, or thought to pray; but as he is God-Man, our Incarnate Saviour; ſo he prayes for us. And this is great matter of comfort.

1. He doth it *ex officio*, as an authorized High-Prieſt, in the diſcharge of the Office the Father hath appointed him; and he hath
B undertaken to be our Advocate and Mediator.

2. He doth it *ex affectu*, as a merciful High-Prieſt, in compaſsion, and fellow-feeling of our wants and neceſsities.

3. He doth it *ex merito*, as a moſt meritorious High-Prieſt. Chriſt's Prayers are precious Prayers, of high value with God the Father. His Prayers are purchaſes of grace and comfort for us. They ſay, *Carè emitur, quod precibus emitur*; that's deeply bought, that's bought with Prayers. Sure the Prayers of Chriſt are of an high price with God, and of infinite vertue.

III. 'Tis *Ego rogabo*; it runs in the future Tenſe; and ſo 'tis a
C promiſe of Chriſt's continual Interceſſion. So long as we are in a ſtate of want, ſo long we are ſure, Chriſt will continue his mediation for us. He was a ſuppliant for us here upon earth, and yet he performs that office in heaven. He is *now at the right hand of God, and makes interceſſion for us*, Rom. viii. 34. *He ever lives to make interceſſion for us*, Hebr. vii. 25. His hands are not weary, as *Moſes* his were, when he held them up to God in behalf of the people. As long as Chriſt is in Heaven, a Chriſtian ſhall not want a ſupply of comfort. The Saints in heaven are well-wiſhers to us, but no mediators for us. We have a communion with them, but we receive no communication from them.
D What ſaith the Apoſtle? *Hebr.* xii. 23. *We are come to the Spirits of juſt men made perfect, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the New Teſtament.* They are our friends, but he is our only Advocate and Mediator.

But then, the Promiſe being for hereafter, *I will pray the Father to give you the Spirit*; is not this ſpeech ſeemingly prepoſterous? Firſt to require us to love him, and ſecondly to obey him, and then upon theſe performances to give his Spirit? who can love him, or obey him, or ſo much as acknowledge him, till he hath the Spirit? *No man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Cor. xii. 3. How then
E is it, that the Spirit, which is the Principle of Obedience, is here made the reward of Obedience; and the root of Love is made the fruit of Love? I anſwer:

1. Chriſt here promiſes *Non ſtatum, ſed gradum*; not the firſt ſtate, and ſtock of Grace, but the improvement, and increaſe, and enlargements of Grace. His preventing Grace, that breeds our Obedience; his ſubſequent Grace, that rewards our Obedience. *Give the talent unto him, that hath ten talents. To him that hath ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundantly.* 2. This

Serm. II.

2. This Promiſe here made us, is of the Spirit, not ſo much as a Sanctifier, but as he is a Comforter. 'Tis not a Promiſe ſo much of Sanctification, as of Conſolation; and that may well follow the Duties of Love and Obedience. Firſt let's look to our duties, and then our comforts will come afterwards. Chriſt calls theſe ſpiritual conſolations, *a Supping with us*, Rev. iii. 20. *I will come, and Sup with him*; that's a refreſhing after the work, and labour of the day. Theſe *Euges* of God's Spirit ſhall be given to us as encouragements in the practice and purſuance of Piety and Obedience.

We have ſeen the Procurer is Chriſt's Prayer for us. Now let's conſider,

Secondly, The Authour, and Donor of it, that's *the Father*; *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give it you.* And here is,

I. The Donor, *the Father.*

II. The Donation, He ſhall *give it.*

III. The Parties to be endowed, that's *You.*

I. The Donor, the Father. He is the Original. Saint *Peter* ſhews the order and conveyance of this gift in his firſt Sermon on *Pentecoſt*, when as on this Day, the Promiſe was performed, *Acts* ii. 33. *Chriſt being at the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, hath ſhed forth this, which now you ſee and hear.* Chriſt names him here *the Father*; a Relative Name it is, but yet without the expreſſing that, to which it referrs. And that makes this gracious and ſweet Name more comprehenſive. Conceive it in theſe three ſeveral relations.

1. It referrs to Chriſt; ſo 'tis all one, as if he had ſaid, *My Father.* And that makes the Promiſe of Chriſt a great deal more hopeful. God is a moſt loving Father, Chriſt a moſt beloved Son. What can ſuch a Father deny to ſuch a Son? *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; *ask of me, and I will give thee*, Pſal. ii. 8. *The Father loves the Son, and hath given all things into his hand*, John iii. 35. *Orat Chriſtianus, & exauditur; orat Chriſtus, & non exauditur?* ſaith *Auguſtine.* Sure the Father will deny him nothing.

2. This Name of *Father* may have another Relation; *Pater veſter*; the *Father*, that is *Your Father, he will give it you.* And that makes the promiſe yet more hopeful. Should Chriſt intercede for enemies, there were hope of prevailing, *Pſal.* lxviii. 18. *For his enemies he hath received gifts, even for the rebellious.* But when he ſues for his Brethren to their common Father, there is no doubt of obtaining. A ſuit made to a Father, to be good to his Children, is no hard requeſt. *Joab* ſped preſently, when he ſued to *David* for his darling *Abſalom.* Saint *Paul*'s ſuit for *Oneſimus* is very pathetical; *I beſeech thee for my Son Oneſimus, whom I have begotten; receive him, that is, mine own bowels.* How much more is Chriſt's Prayer prevalent, *I beſeech thee, Father, for theſe my brethren, whom thou haſt begotten; they are to thee as thine own bowels? Chriſt* makes this the aſſurance of this promiſe; *Your heavenly Father will not deny the Holy Ghoſt to you that ask him*, Luke xi. 13.

3. This

A 3. This Name Father hath another reference in Scripture; that makes this promiſe yet more hopefull. *He is the Father of Mercies, and conſolation*, 2 Cor. i. 3. and ſo he is the Father of this Bleſſing, which is here promiſed us. He is the *Father of comfort*; that is,

1. He hath a natural propenſity to it. He is graciouſly inclined in himſelf, and of himſelf, to comfort the afflicted.

2. He is ſtored with comforts and conſolations. He hath plenty of them. We may ask *Eliphaz* his Queſtion, *What? are the conſolations of God ſmall to thee?*

3. He takes delight in it, as the Father of it. He loves not to
B grieve the Sons of men; but he loves to comfort them. Comfort is his natural proper work. *De ſuo bonus, de noſtro juſtus.* We breed our own ſorrows and afflictions; but God begets our comforts and conſolations. *He delights in mercy*, Micah vii. 18. and *that we ſhould delight our ſelves in his great goodneſs*, Nehem. ix. 25.
That's the Donor, *The Father.*

II. See the Donation, *He will give. I will pray the Father, and he will give you.* 'Tis an Expreſſion of much certainty: It runs not thus, *I will pray the Father, that he would give you:* but *I will pray the Father, and he will give you.* 'Tis a word of great aſſurance. And
C this aſſurance, 'tis grounded upon a double priviledge.

1. Is *privilegium doni.* Promiſes of grace, aſſurances of ſpiritual comforts are much more abſolute, than promiſes of temporal bleſſings. We may crave health, and wealth, and outward proſperity, and receive that anſwer, which was given to the ſons of *Zebedee*; *Ye know not what you ask*, 'tis not good for you: But never any man begged grace of God, and his Holy Spirit; but he did obtain it.

2. This confident Aſſurance, *He will give*, 'tis *privilegium perſonæ*, the ſpecial privilege of Chriſt, our Interceſſour; his Prayers are alwayes prevalent, and effectual. *Father*, ſaith Chriſt, *I know thou hear-*
D *eſt me alwayes*, John xi. 42. Our prayers are many times unſucceſsful in temporal things for our ſelves, and ſometimes in ſpiritual things, when we pray for others; but the Prayers of Chriſt are alwayes prevailing. *He turns not away the face of his anointed, but grants all his petitions.*

III. Take notice of the Parties, to whom this Grant and Donation is made; *He will give you another Comforter.* And they are conſiderable in a double capacity:

1. Conſider them in their Perſonal capacity, as they were the Apoſtles then preſent, and converſing with Chriſt.
E 2. Conſider them in their Repreſentative capacity, as they did repreſent the whole body of Chriſtians in after-ſucceſsions.

1. This Promiſe was made to the Apoſtles in their perſonal capacity; they in Perſon were to be made partakers of this promiſed Comforter. I note it, to confute that groſs and preſumptuous errour of ſome ancient Hereticks, *Montanus* and *Manes*, that would have this promiſe made good, this *Paracletus*, and Comforter, to be then ſent,

Serm. II.

when they ſtarted up in the Church, and not before; whereas this Promiſe was made, and made good to the Apoſtles, who were dead and gone, and in heaven long before theſe Hereſies were hatched in Hell. A

2. Conſider them in their repreſentative capacity, in whom Chriſt intended the whole body of Believers. *Specialiter dictum generaliter ſapit.* This ſpeech and promiſe belongs to all, and every Believer. The Apoſtles indeed had their Apoſtolical priviledges and eminent endowments, that reſted in them, and ceaſed with them: But the graces and comforts of the Spirit are the common portion of all God's children. They have all *common ſalvation*, Jude 3. *a like precious faith*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. And ſo are alike partakers of theſe *great and precious promiſes.* Our Saviour aſſures us of our joynt intereſt in the benefit of his Prayers with the Apoſtles, *John* xvii. 20. *Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them that ſhall believe in me through their word.* By vertue of this Prayer of Chriſt, the Church of God hath, and ſhall enjoy the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt unto the end of the world. B

Now follows,

Thirdly, The Promiſe and Bleſſing it ſelf; that's called here *Another Comforter.* And what that is, our Saviour tells us in the 26th *Verſe*, *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt.* And here ye may diſcover three remarkable Truths concerning the Holy Ghoſt: C

I. Here is the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt.

II. Here is the Perſon of the Holy Ghoſt.

III. Here is the Office, and Employment of the Holy Ghoſt.

I. We have here the Divinity of the Holy Ghoſt. How doth that appear? In that he is promiſed to be *Another Comforter*; *Alium utique, ſed non minorem:* Aug. He promiſes another, but not an inferiour Comforter. The comfort, ſure, would be as great, as the loſs and ſorrow, for which it is a comfort. What was their ſorrow? That they muſt part with Chriſt, the Son of God. And the loſs of his preſence cannot be made up, but by one that is equal to him. The Plaiſter muſt be as broad as the Soar. None but God, can reſtore us the comforts which we have found in God. 'Twere cold comfort to loſe the comforts in God, and then to be put over to the comforts of a Creature. When God told *Moſes*, that he would withdraw his own preſence from them, but yet would ſend an Angel to conduct them, what ſaith *Moſes? If thy preſence go not with us, carry us not from hence*, Exod. xxxiii. 15. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and none do I deſire in compariſon of thee.* One Sun affords us more light and chearfulneſs than all the Stars, though never ſo bright. Let the Sun be ſet, and 'twill be night, though all the Firmament be full of Starrs. He that muſt ſupply the comforts of Chriſt's preſence, muſt be as Chriſt is, *the God of comfort:* That's his Divinity. D E

II. Here we have the Perſon of the Holy Ghoſt. He is here expreſſed as a divine Perſon. Were he but a divine Quality, or Motion, as *Socinus* would make him, we might call it a comfort, but not a Comforter. *Actiones ſunt ſuppoſitorum.* Actions proceed from Perſons.

A *Com-*

A A *Comforter* is the name of a Perſon; *The Spirit he ſhall teſtifie*, ſaith Chriſt. *He*, that points out a Perſon. Surely He, into whoſe Name we are baptized; He, whoſe Temples we are made; He, whom we worſhip, in whoſe Name we bleſs our ſelves, and others, is more then an Action, or Motion, or Attribute; he is a true ſubſiſting divine Perſon.

III. Come we to his Office and Employment, he is a *Comforter*. The word *Paracletus* admits of a threefold conſtruction:

1. It ſignifies an Advocate and Interceſſour, one that ſues for us.
2. It ſignifies an Encourager, one that exhorts us.
3. It ſignifies a Comforter, one that miniſters conſolation to us.

B And the Holy Ghoſt may be ſaid to be all theſe. And all theſe he was to the Apoſtles, as on this time.

1. He was their Interceſſour, and made requeſt for them. How powerfully did they pray by his aſſiſtance? *Acts* iv. 31. So that when they prayed, the place was ſhaken where they were aſſembled.

2. He was an Encourager to them. How ſtout, and reſolute were they? *Peter*, that before was frighted by a poor Damoſel, how confidently doth he anſwer the High-Prieſt and Elders? *Acts* iv.

3. He was a Comforter to them in all their afflictions; when they were beaten, and ſhamefully entreated, they *went away rejoycing, that*
C *they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the name of Jeſus*, Act. v. 41.

He is all theſe to us.

But yet the Exigence of this place makes moſt for the name of a Comforter, that being a proper remedy for their preſent Malady. They were now in a penſive and ſorrowful condition; and ſo ſtood in need of comfort and conſolation: And indeed, this name of the *Holy Ghoſt*, that he is a *Comforter*, 'tis the chief Name above all other his names. As they ſay of the *Mount of Olives*, though other trees grew there, yet the Olive-tree carried away the Name from all other fruits: So the Holy Ghoſt is a Spirit of Counſel, and of Fortitude, and of the Fear of
D the LORD; but above all, he is the Spirit of Comfort. All his other actions and inſpirations, they are all to this purpoſe, to breed us comfort. His illuminations are, that we may be *filled with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. The troubles and perplexities, which he ſtirs up in our conſciences, they are all intended to breed in us a more ſound comfort. *Terret ut exhilaret.* He doth perplex us, that he might more ſweetly comfort us. As *Joſeph* dealt with his Brethren, firſt he affrighted them, that he might afterwards the more rejoyce them. His deſertions and damps, that often-times ariſe in the ſoul of a Chriſtian, are intended for comfort, that when he returns again to our hearts, we
E may the more ſweetly enjoy him. He miniſters Corroſives, to make way for Cordials. 'Tis true, the world skills not of theſe comforts; but, as *Chryſoſtom* often ſpeaks to his Auditours, *Sancti intelligunt quid dico*; Chriſtians that are acquainted with God, do feel and finde them. Indeed trey are comforts of another nature, than ſuch as the World calls and counts Comforts. As is the Comforter, ſuch are his comforts. Who is our Comforter? The Holy Spirit.

Serm. II.

1. He is a Spirit, and ſuch are his comforts, ghoſtly comforts, ſpiritual conſolations; *Righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. xiv. 17. Then,

2. He is an holy Spirit, and ſuch are his comforts, holy comforts. He will not have us rejoyce in iniquity, but rejoyce in the truth. Senſual comforts are ſinful comforts. In that caſe, our Comforter will be a Reprover. *John* xvi. 8. *When the Comforter comes, he will reprove the World of ſin.* He will comfort us in piety, not ſooth and flatter us in our impiety. If we grieve him, he will be ſure to grieve us again. 'Tis the ſolemn prayer of the Church on this Feſtival, that *we might rejoyce in his holy comfort.*

There remains one thing, which is,

Fourthly, The ſtability, and conſtancy of this Comfort, *That he may abide with you for ever.* And that makes it to be comfort indeed, when our Comforter dwells with us, and in us, and never forſakes us. He is not *viſitator ſubitus, ſed perpetuus conſolator, & cohabitator æternus*, Aug. He comes not gueſt-wiſe, to ſtay for a night, but fixes his abode with us. All other earthly and worldly comforts, the beſt of them all, are tranſient and vaniſhing: they are *breves conſolatiunculæ*, as *Auguſtine* terms them. The poor, petty comforts of this world are of no continuance; flaſhes of comfort, not laſting flames. But the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt are laſting comforts. The Apoſtle calls them *ſtrong conſolations*, Hebr. vi. 18. St. *Paul* terms them *Everlaſting conſolations*: 2 Theſſ. ii. 16. *God, that loved us, and hath given us everlaſting conſolation, comfort your hearts.* They are ſuch comforts, as no man can deprive us of. *Your joy no man ſhall take from you*, John xvi. 22. The flame is as the fewel is. Straw and Stubble yield a ſudden blaze, and preſently out again. And ſuch are all worldly comforts. But this comfort of the Spirit is fed with an everlaſting fewel. *The burning of it is fire, and much wood; the Spirit of the Lord, as a River of Oyl, doth feed and maintain it.* He will *alwayes abide with us*; eſpecially he will then be a Comforter, when we ſtand moſt in need of him. In the day of Affliction, in the hour of Temptation, at the point of Death, when all outward comforts fail us, all other comforts leave and forſake us, then this comfort will ſtand by us, relieve and comfort us. *In the multitude of the ſorrows that ſhall then be in our hearts, his comforts ſhall refreſh our Souls*, Pſal. xciv. 19.

ON WHIT-SUNDAY,

The Third Sermon.

ACTS ii. 38.

Then Peter *said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

THis portion of Scripture, which I have read unto you, 'tis seasonable and suitable to the present time. 'Tis part of the first Sermon, which was preached on the first day of our Christian Pentecost, which we now celebrate.

And as the occasion of it was the wonderful effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles; so in the Sermon we may discover many great and remarkable evidences and workings of that Spirit.

First, We have here the spirit of Conviction: *The Holy Ghost*, by the preaching of St. *Peter*, reproves and convinces the people of their great sin in crucifying of Christ. And that's one great work of the Holy Ghost. *When the Comforter comes*, saith our Saviour, *Joh.* xvi. 8. *He shall reprove and convince the World of sin.* 'Tis the first manifestation of the Spirit in St. *Peter*. He labours to bring his Auditors to a sight of their sins. *Ye have taken Jesus Christ, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain him*, Vers. 23. What the Prophet *Micah* saith of himself, Chap. iii. 8. is most true of St. *Peter*, *Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the* LORD, *to declare unto Jacob his transgressions, and to Israel his sins.* That's the first evidence of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Conviction.

And then,

Secondly, We have a second Evidence of it in the People, and that's the Spirit of Compunction, in the foregoing Verse ye have it; *When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and to*

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to the reſt of the Apoſtles, Men, and Brethren, What ſhall we do? I, this is a proper and a kindly work, when the word of converſion begets in us the work of compunction. It was not their hearing the Apoſtles ſpeak in divers Languages the wonderful works of God, *Verſ.* 11. that did work this effect in them; (the moſt of them mocked at that, the beſt did but wonder at it) but the charging of their ſins upon their conſciences, *You have been the betrayers and murderers of the Son of God*, that word pierced and wounded their hearts, that wrought in them a ſerious compunction.

And what theſe men did, St. *Paul* tells us, will be found in other men, 1 Cor. xiv. 23. *If ye all ſpeak with ſtrange Tongues, and there come in thoſe, that are unbelievers, will they not ſay, Ye are mad?* (There is ſmall difference 'twixt drunkenneſs and madneſs) but if ye prophecy, preach to their conſciences, then a Sinner is convinced of all, and judged of all. That's the ſecond manifeſtation of the Spirit in this work of Compunction. And then,

Thirdly, We have a third Manifeſtation, that's the Spirit and work of converſion: to which *Peter* directs them in the words of my Text, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.*

So then the words I have read unto you, are St. *Peter*'s preſcription to theſe diſtreſſed and perplexed Sinners, ſhewing them what courſe they muſt take to eaſe and cure the anguiſh of their hearts, and to ſettle in themſelves the peace and comfort of their ſouls and conſciences. And of it we will take a double conſideration.

Firſt, In general, we will take notice of the courſe St. *Peter* takes with them.

Secondly, We will conſider the Particulars of the Preſcription, which he doth commend to them.

Firſt, for the courſe he takes with them; it ſtands thus. In the foregoing Verſe ye ſee he had caſt them into a great perplexity; now follows the Remedy, which St. *Peter* preſcribes them. And now indeed St. *Peter* comes to his proper work, ſhews himſelf a right Miniſter of the Goſpel. The proper effect of the Goſpel is not to terrifie and affright men; but to eaſe and comfort them. The Goſpel, 'tis not the Miniſtration of death and horrour; but of life and comfort. 'Tis the Office of the Law to wound the conſcience with the ſenſe of ſin; the work of the Goſpel is to pacifie the conſcience, and relieve it with comfort. The Law, that works in us *the ſpirit of fear*, and of *bondage*; but the Goſpel begets in us *the ſpirit of love*, and of a *ſound minde*, 2 Tim. i. 7.

Indeed, 'tis requiſite we ſhould be firſt perplexed before we be comforted; firſt we muſt know what a wounded ſpirit is, e're God will acquaint us with the *ſpirit of peace*. God, and his Goſpel comforts none, but ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit. As *Bernard* ſpeaks ſweetly, *Deus non infundit oleum miſericordiæ, niſi in vas contritum.*

God

A God never pours in the oil of mercy, but into a contrite and broken heart. A broken veſſel will hold it beſt. A ſinner, not troubled with the ſenſe of ſins, *nec vult, nec poteſt, nec debet*, neither will, nor can, no, nor ought to lay hold on the comforts of the Goſpel.

Compunction and Contrition is that which the Goſpel expects of us. But the Goſpel doth not break or bruiſe us by its own ſtrength, by Evangelical means; they are all of a healing and ſuppling nature: but it makes uſe of the Hammer of the Law; that gives thoſe ſtrokes and blows which bring us to contrition. As a Phyſitian that comes to cure ſome diſeaſed party, and finding ſome ulcer, or impoſtumed ſore, he
B calls for a Chirurgeon, uſes his help to cut and lance it: So the Goſpel, 'tis all for curing and healing; but finding an Impoſtume of ſin in our hearts, it makes uſe of the Law to prick the heart, and let out the corruption. As he that means to take ſome wilde beaſt, not to deſtroy it, but to tame it, and keep it alive, he lets looſe his Dogs, ſets up his nets, and then, when 'tis hamper'd in the toyl, and ready to be worried, then he comes in, takes off the Dogs, heals it, if it be hurt, and wounded, and keeps it alive: So God ſets looſe the terrors of the Law, they hunt, and purſue the ſoul of a ſinner; and when 'tis ſeiz'd upon, and in the very jaws of Hell, the Goſpel comes in, and reſcues
C and relieves it.

Will you ſee, that the proper work of the Goſpel is not to wound, but to cure; not to afflict, but to comfort; not to caſt down, but to raiſe up; look upon Chriſt's firſt commiſſion; There is contained the tenor of the Goſpel, there you ſhall find the proper work, for which Chriſt came. *Luk.* iv. 18. he opens his commiſſion at his firſt Sermon, which he preached at *Nazareth*. *The Spirit of the* LORD *is upon me, he hath annointed me to preach the Goſpel to the poor, he hath ſent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the Captives, to give ſight to the blind, to ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed.* Here is poverty, broken-
D neſs of heart, captivity, blindneſs, bruiſing. The Goſpel findes us thus, it makes us not thus. Theſe are all the works of the Law, convincing us of ſin; the Goſpel undertakes the cure of them; that brings the balm of *Gilead*. *He comes with healing in his wings.*

'Twas St *Peter*'s proper work to relieve and comfort thoſe diſtreſſed ſouls. See, he readily and ſpeedily undertakes, and effects it.

Firſt, It ſhews his Skill.

Secondly, It ſhews his Care.

Thirdly, It ſhew his Compaſſion.

Firſt, It ſhews his Skill. He ſpeaks not to theſe diſtreſſed Creatures,
E as ſometime *Eliſha* did of the perplexed *Shunammite*, 2 King. iv. 27. *O!* ſaith he, *her ſoul is vexed within her, and the* LORD *hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.* No; *Peter* diſcerns their Malady, and hath a preſent Remedy to apply to them. See here a *learned Scribe, fully inſtructed for the Kingdom of Heaven*, able to adminiſter a word of direction in the greateſt extremity. Like that good Samaritane, *Luke* x. 34 he carries his Wine and Oil about him, hath them in a readineſs upon all occaſions. 'Tis

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'Tis the greateſt evidence and argument of skill in Religion, thus to be able to eaſe and cure the wound of Conſcience. As it ſhews him to be an expert Chirurgeon, not that can heal any outward wound, or ſore only; but that can cure an inward Ulcer, ſtanch the bleeding of a vein within: ſo 'tis good to be able to comfort people in outward ſorrows; but he is a Phyſitian of ſome value, that can ſtay the bleeding of a wounded Conſcience. As *Auguſtine* upon that place of the *Galatians*, Chap.vi.1. *If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one; Nihil adeò virum ſpiritualem demonſtrat, ac alienæ conſcientiæ tractatio.* He is a ſpiritual man indeed, that can handle a troubled conſcience dexterouſly. Many place Learning in other matters, to diſpute Controverſies, to reſolve hard Queſtions; but Chriſt counts this the higheſt point of learning to be able to direct and comfort the ſoul of a ſorrowful Sinner. *Eſai.* l. 4. *The* LORD *hath given me the tongue of the Learned, that I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary.*

That's the firſt, it ſhews his Skill.

Secondly, And then it ſhews his Care. He makes haſte to give eaſe to the ſouls of theſe men. St. *Peter* neglects no opportunity to do good to mens ſouls. He was once queſtioned for being too forward in preaching to *Cornelius*, Act.xi. he was never charged for being too backward. Above all, God requires our care over ſuch as theſe men were, caſt into perplexity. The loſt Groat, ſearch for that diligently; the loſt Sheep, look out for that ſpeedily. Of all others take care of ſuch, as theſe men in perplexity. God is moſt regardful of ſuch. *The LORD is nigh to them that are of a broken heart*, Pſal.xxxiv.18. And ſo he loves we ſhould be nigh them too: as ye love your ſervants ſhould take care of all your little ones; but, if any be ſick, or in pain, O! ſtir not from that. If you take not the ſeaſon to comfort them, ye may come too late. As *Paul* ſpeaks to the *Corinths*. Comfort the excommunicate man, leſt Satan devour him. A little delay may make things deſperate. As *Jehu* at his leiſure, bethought himſelf of *Jezabel*'s body, *Go viſit her, and bury her*; O! you ſhould have ſpoken ſooner, 'tis too late now, the Dogs have devoured her.

That's the ſecond; it ſhews his Care. And then,

Thirdly. It ſhews his Compaſſion. St. *Peter* is thus quick and ſpeedy to give eaſe and comfort; his bowels, no doubt, yearned within him in tenderneſs over them. Here is an evidence of an Apoſtolical Spirit. *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Cor.xi.29. O! it was cruelty in thoſe hard-hearted, Levite, and Prieſt, that ſaw the man lie wounded and bleeding, and turned away from him, *Luke* x. 32. How barbarous were the High-Prieſts to ſee the ſoul of *Judas* weltering in his gore, crying out in anguiſh, and never regard him! *What is that to us? ſee thou to it.* A Levite, and a Prieſt, cruel and incompaſſionate? What ſaith St. *Paul?* A *Prieſt muſt be ſuch an one as can have compaſſion on the ſouls of men*, Heb. v. 2. Every one will pity a poor bleeding Infant, that hath taken a fall;

A fall; I, but the Nurſe, that ſhould have had it always in her arms, ſhe will run, and ſpring forth in compaſſion, and catch it up preſently.

We have ſeen the courſe St. *Peter* takes with theſe men in the general.

Come we now,

Secondly, To the Particulars of St. *Peter*'s Preſcription. In it ye may obſerve theſe two things.

Firſt, Is the Means he preſcribes.

Secondly, Is the Help and Benefit, he tells them, they ſhall finde by the uſe of thoſe Means.

B *Firſt*, The Means, he preſcribes, they are two. The

I. Is a purging.

II. Is a bathing.

I. *Repent*; that's the purging of the ſoul.

II. *Be baptized*; there is the bathing.

Secondly, The Help and Benefit he promiſes them; that's double,

I. Health.

II. Strength.

I. Health; *They ſhall receive remiſſion of Sins.*

II. Strength; *They ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.*

C I. The firſt means is Repentance; that's the firſt Ingredient in the Cure. The firſt Evangelical Duty, that God requires for obtaining mercy and pardon, 'tis Repentance. Before our Faith can be perſwaded of pardon, nay, before it can lay hold of pardon, nay, before God will reach out his pardon, he exacts Repentance. Before thou ſtretch out thine hand of Faith, thou muſt humble thy ſelf upon the knee of Repentance. Faith, that's the Cordial to revive and comfort thee; but Repentance that's the Purgation that muſt firſt work, and fit thee to receive this Cordial. Still the Scripture gives the precedency to Repentance. 'Tis the Primitive Original Grace, even before Faith

D it ſelf, as it ſerves to juſtifie. All the Promiſes are made only to the penitent. 'Twas the firſt Leſſon St. *John* preached, *Mat.* iii. 2. *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* 'Twas the firſt Leſſon our Saviour taught, *Mark* i. 15. *Repent, and believe the Goſpel.* Firſt *repent*, and then *believe the Goſpel.* 'Twas the firſt Leſſon the Apoſtles preached, *Mark* vi. 12. *They preached that men ſhould repent*, Heb. vi. 1. 'Tis called *The Foundation of repentance.* St. *Paul* ſets this grace in its proper place, *Acts* xx. 21. *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

For underſtanding the goodneſs of this Preſcript of *Repentance*, take

E notice of it in theſe four reſpects.

1. See the Neceſſity of this ſpiritual Medicine.

2. The Properneſs of it.

3. The Efficacy of it.

4. The Seaſonableneſs of it in St. *Peter*'s preſcription.

1. Take notice of the Neceſſity of it. And you will finde, that Repentance is abſolutely neceſſary to the obtaining of pardon. It

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carries with it not only the neceſſity of a Duty, we ſin, if we do it not; but the neceſſity of a remedy, we periſh, if we omit it. As when a loving Father ſhall command his ſick childe to uſe ſuch a Medicine to ſave his life, ſhould the childe refuſe it, he ſins not only as a diſobedient childe againſt his Father, but as a deſperate Creature againſt his own life. Impenitency is the damning ſin. All ſins deſerve damnation, but 'tis impenitency which doth actually caſt us. As he that hath eaten poyſon, hath done that which in it ſelf is deadly; but yet there is an Antidote that can cure it: now to refuſe the Antidote, is more deſperate. Other ſins are *contra officia*, againſt our Duty; but Impenitency is *contra remedium*, 'tis againſt our recovery. Still the Scripture promiſes this, as a neceſſary Condition for obtaining mercy. *Acts* v. 3. *Him God hath exalted, to give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins.* Firſt repentance, and then forgiveneſs. *Luke* xxiv. 37. *It was neceſſary, that repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his Name.* Again, *Acts* xi. 18. *Then hath God to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* 'Tis everywhere ſtrictly exacted, neceſſarily preſcribed, no Salvation without it. A B

2. 'Tis a proper cure for ſin, this penitential ſorrow. To ſpeak truly, ſorrow and remorſe, 'tis good for nothing but to deſtroy ſin. God, when he implanted this affection in our ſouls, he intended it only for this purpoſe, to purge and cure our ſpiritual maladies. We indeed imploy it otherwiſe; we make uſe of this Herb of Grace for other ends. We ſorrow for loſs of friends, for loſs of health, for loſs of riches; but we miſ-apply it, 'tis purpoſely meant to bewail our ſins, and to cure our ſouls. How will that appear? Let Saint *Chryſoſtem* tell you. "Would you know the Nature, and Virtue of any "Medicine, what it is good for, whether it be fit to cure this wound, "or that pain, or ſuch a ſickneſs? obſerve the working of it, ſee what "good it doth. If we apply it to ſuch a ſore, and it doth not cure it, we "ſay we are miſtaken, we will uſe it no more to that purpoſe. If "we uſe it for help in another malady, and it works kindly, and "brings a cure with it, we conclude 'tis good for this diſeaſe only, "not for the other. Then make the trial of thy ſorrow by this expe- "riment. Thou haſt loſt ſome dear friend by death, and thou ſorrow- "eſt for him; but can thy ſorrow recover him? Thou haſt received "ſome great loſs in thine eſtate, thou mourneſt for that; but with all "thy ſorrow canſt thou make it up again? 'Tis ſo in all outward af- "flictions; all thy ſorrow for them, 'tis ſpilt and unprofitable. Sor- "row then was not made for theſe. But then, on the other hand, thou "haſt committed a ſin, by it loſt God's favour, wounded thy Con- "ſcience, hazarded thy ſalvation; ſorrow, and mourn, and lament "for theſe, and thou recovereſt all again. Thy ſorrow will aboliſh "thy ſin, recover God's favour, pacifie thy conſcience, reſettle thy "hope, and aſſurance of heaven. Surely, we may conclude, ſorrow "was intended for theſe ſpiritual purpoſes; 'tis ſovereign for theſe, "and for nothing elſe. C D E

3. See

A 3. See the efficacy of this preſcript, the ſtrength and virtue of this Balm of *Gilead.* 'Tis able to work ſtrange cures, to recover men of deſperate maladies. Theſe men to whom St. *Peter* preſcribes it, and that were helped by it, were not ordinary ſinners, but guilty of a moſt heinous and deteſtable wickedneſs; They had been murderers of our bleſſed Saviour, ſpilt the blood of the *Lord of Glory*. Murder in any kinde, is a grievous ſin; The Conſcience of a Murderer can hardly be pacified, or once hope for pardon. *Cain*, when he murdered his brother *Abel*, he cries out, his *ſin was greater then could be pardoned.* How much more grievous was the ſin of theſe men, that ſtand guilty
B of the blood of the Son of God? Yet ſee, St. *Peter* doubts not, but by repentance this ſin may be pardoned, and their conſciences appeaſed, and fully pacified.

See then the ſovereign virtue and efficacy of Repentance; it can cure the ſoul of the greateſt ſin, procure pardon for the moſt crying wickedneſs. As no ſin is ſo ſmall, but it needs repentance; ſo no ſin ſo great, but may be done away by this grace of Repentance. We count that a rare Inſtrument, that can *pertinere ad maxima, & minima*, that can ſerve for all works, great and little: So, ſure, repentance hath an admirable vertue, thus to have power over all kind of ſins. It muſt
C be a rare medicine, that can cure all diſeaſes, a πάγχρηστον. In courſe of Phyſick, they ſay, there are ſome diſeaſes, that are *Opprobria Medicorum*, they are the ſhame of Phyſitians, they know not what to ſay to them, they muſt leave Nature to it ſelf to wreſtle and ſtrive with them: But, in courſe of Religion, there are no ſins, but the grace of Repentance will Maſter them, and prevail over them. This God aſſures of, *Eſai.* lv. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous his imagination, and return unto the* LORD, *for he will aboundantly pardon.* And then he adds, *For my thoughts are not as your thoughts.* As if he ſhould ſay, "You uſe to pardon ſmall faults, to revenge
D "great ones; pardon Petty-larcinie, puniſh Robberies, blood-"ſhed: I, but Repentance ſhall obtain at God's hands pardon of "the greateſt crimes. See what an ample Commiſſion Chriſt hath granted for the pardon of ſins, *Whoſoſoever ſins ye remit, they ſhall be remitted*, Joh. xx. 23. No perſons excluded, no ſins excepted. St. *Peter* preſcribes this ſalve of Repentance, even to Chriſt's Murderers. That's the third, the Efficacy of it.

4. Take notice of the Seaſonableneſs of this Preſcription. Which I note the rather, becauſe it may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, that St. *Peter* ſhould urge theſe men to ſorrow and repentance, they were
E already deeply caſt down with ſorrow and anguiſh, they were *prickt at the heart, pierced*, and wounded with ſorrow and perplexity. One would think ſome other courſe were more ſeaſonable, then thus to urge them to further ſorrow, and repentance. No, no; St. *Peter* is right, he ſees their ſouls are in perplexity, and yet he calls upon them to repent; they are in ſorrow, and yet they muſt ſorrow if they mean to be eaſed.

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There is indeed a large difference 'twixt that ſorrow which they already felt, and that penitential ſorrow, which St. *Peter* enjoyns them. Ye may obſerve a threefold difference.

(1.) Their former ſorrow, it was a legal ſorrow, wrought into them by the terrours of God's Law, and the ſenſe of their ſin: But the ſorrow, St. *Peter* commends to them, is an Evangelical ſorrow, a ſorrow wrought by the Goſpel, and a gift of Chriſt. The former kind of ſorrow ariſes in the ſoul upon apprehenſion of God's wrath, and fear of damnation. And this is uſeful and requiſite. *Fac, fac vel timore pœnæ, ſi non potes ex amore juſtitiæ.* But then, the repentance of the Goſpel, that's wrought into us out of an apprehenſion of God's mercy and goodneſs, and ſo makes us grieve, that we have offended him. A malefactour, that looks for nothing but death, he is ſorrowful and perplexed, but it is becauſe he is caſt and condemned: But then, when he hears the King will pardon him, if he humble and ſubmit himſelf, and ſorrow for his offence, his ſorrow now is of another nature; he mourns now for offending ſo gracious a Prince. That's the firſt difference; the one is Legal, the other Evangelical.

(2.) Their former ſorrow and compunction, it was *dolor paſſivus*, a pang and paſſion of ſorrow that ſeiz'd upon them, whether they would or no: But the penitential ſorrow, that St. *Peter* exhorts them to, 'tis *dolor activus*, a voluntary, willing ſorrow, to which they muſt ſtir up, and provoke themſelves. When God makes our ſins appear in our Conſciences, our ſoul cannot but be amazed and perplexed, our Conſcience will ſtartle and be affrighted at them. The flaſhes of Hell fire cannot but ſcare us. But that's not this penitential ſorrow, which *Peter* commends to them. This muſt be a deliberate voluntary grief. When a man ſets himſelf to mourn, and bewail his tranſgreſſions, he is not barely haunted with his ſins, but he calls his ſins to remembrance, ſearches them out. Repentance that the Goſpel commands, 'tis a willing repentance.

1. Look upon it in the Original, 'tis a Grace, and that's ſeated in the will, it ſerves to enable it, and to make it willing.

2. Look upon it in the Exerciſe, ſo 'tis a Duty; God requires and expects Repentance. Now, God requires our actions. Sufferings are not commanded, but inflicted; but Duties are enjoyned, and we muſt willingly perform them.

3. Look upon it in the Uſe, ſo 'tis a Condition upon the performance of which God doth Covenant with us. Now he that means to reap good by the Covenant, muſt himſelf actively and willingly fulfil the Conditions. All which ſhews us, that Evangelical, and Penitential ſorrow muſt be elective, we muſt ſtir up our ſelves to this ſpiritual ſorrow. A true Penitent muſt provoke himſelf to ſorrow, praying, that he may ſorrow; grieving that he cannot grieve, never repenting that he hath repented.

(3.) The ſorrow they felt before, when their hearts were pricked, differs from the ſorrow to which St. *Peter* exhorts them; that was *dolor*

A *lor morbi*, the pain of the Diſeaſe: but this he requires of them, 'tis *dolor medicinæ*, the ſmart that comes by the Cure and Medicine. To take thoſe anguiſhes of conſcience, into which they were caſt, for true repentance is to take the malady for the remedy, and the ſmart of the wound for the cure and plaiſter. As in a wound there is a double ſmart; firſt, when 'tis made and bleeds, and feſters: the ſecond is, when the wound is ſearched and dreſſed, and ſalve put into it. The man that was wounded, *Luk.* x. felt pain, when the Theives wounded him; he felt ſmart too, when the *Samaritan* dreſſed him. So theſe mens hearts were pricked, when their ſins were charged upou them,
B but that was the ſmart of the wound; but St. *Peter* calls them to another ſorrow, *Repent*, ſaith he, that's the ſmart of the Medicine.

There is a great deal of difference betwixt the accuſations of conſcience, and the confeſſions of conſcience. A Natural man's conſcience can accuſe and teſtifie our ſins; but 'tis a ſanctified conſcience, that confeſſes and bewails our ſins. And therefore we ſee St. *Peter* goes about to cure the former ſorrow, by preſcribing this other ſorrow. They cry out, *O! what ſhall we do* to be rid of this helliſh ſorrow that hath ſeiſed upon us! Oh! ſaith St. *Peter*, make uſe of heavenly ſorrow, that will redreſs it. 'Tis ſtrange, that ſorrow ſhould cure ſorrow; and yet it
C will do ſo. As when one hath burnt his fleſh with fire, 'tis good to hold the burning to the fire; fire will fetch out the burning: ſo will ſpiritual ſorrow eaſe, and allay that other ſorrow. As Phyſitians will cure men of Scouring and Bloody-fluxes, not by ſtaying the flux, but by giving Purges. Alaſs, we think that encreaſes the malady. No, 'tis the beſt way to cure it. 'Tis good to obſerve the difference 'twixt theſe two ſorrows. 'Tis not every ſtroke of conſcience, every check of ſcul, not every pang of ſorrow, that's true repentance; we may feel all theſe, and feel them in extremity, and yet the bitter Pill of Repentance muſt be taken down for all that. That's the firſt means, a
D ſpiritual purging. Come we

II. To the ſecond Means, which St. *Peter* preſcribes them, that's a ſpiritual bathing; that's the Sacrament of Baptiſm, And here are two things obſervable,

1. Is the Sacramental Action, *Be baptized.*

2. Is the ſpiritual Relation, which it doth import, and imply, and which enlivens this Sacrament, and makes it effectual, that's *In the Name of Jeſus Chriſt.*

1. Is the Sacramental Action; they muſt be *Baptized.* An holy rite in a ſpecial manner appropriated by the Primitive Church to the
E days of Pentecoſt. They eſteemed the waſhing by the Holy Ghoſt to be moſt ſeaſonable upon the ſolemn Feſtival of the Holy Ghoſt.

This outward, external, bodily Ceremony of waſhing in Water, 'tis of divine inſtitution, and ſo neceſſary. Indeed Infidelity, and carnal reaſon is inquiſitive, and is ready to object; *What is not inward converſion, and repentance ſufficient? Do not vilifie that, which God doth ſanctifie. What need theſe outward Ceremonies applications?* Naturally we are

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are prone to take exceptions againſt theſe ſacred inſtitutions. *Socinus* makes it at beſt now, but an indifferent arbitrary Ceremony. As *Naaman* the *Syrian* did, *What means this waſhing ſeven times in Jordan?* What virtue can there be in that poor Element to do away ſins, and to work upon our ſouls? But Faith and Piety know no ſuch reaſonings; but gladly ſubmit to means of Gods chooſing, *Joh.* ix. 7. *Go and waſh in the Pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation Sent, and thou ſhalt be recovered.* Let the means be what it will, if Chriſt ſends us to it, it ſhall be effectual. Purpoſely Chriſt uſes theſe bodily means, as ſpecial conveyances of ſpiritual Grace: Even amongſt men, we ſee outward Evidences and Seals, are accounted ſtrong Aſſurances. We are not content to have Eſtates paſſed over to us by bare Word; but Writings, and Seals, Livery, and Seiſin, are all requiſite. Naturally, we ask, as *Abraham* did, *In quo cognoſcam?* How ſhall it appear that my ſin is pardoned? *What ſhall be the Sign*, ſaith *Hezekiah, that I ſhall recover?* St. *Paul* was a deep Penitent, yet what ſaith *Ananias* to him, *Ariſe, and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins*, Act. xxii. 16. And thus theſe means are outwardly mean, (as waſhing by Water, as when Chriſt cured the blind man, he made no curious exquiſite ſalve, but uſed a little clay, to anoint him withal) that it might appear, that the glory of the Miracle belonged to Chriſt, not to the means. Purpoſely God imploys very mean inſtruments, that our Faith may only depend upon his power, and that our thankfulneſs may aſcribe it only to his Glory.

In particular, Chriſt preſcribes this Sacrament of Baptiſm, and Waſhing in Water, that Element fitly reſembling thoſe ſpiritual effects, which are wrought in Baptiſm.

1. Water hath a force of drawing and killing, and ſuffocating any breathing thing. And this quality of Water is a fit reſemblance of the Grace of Baptiſm. A Sinner, comming to this Sacrament, hath all his ſins drowned and aboliſhed. As the Red-Sea (that famous Type of Chriſtian Baptiſm) drowned all the *Egyptians*, that purſued Gods People, not one eſcaped, all lay dead upon the ſhore; ſo, though an Army of ſins purſue the ſoul of a penitent Sinner, yet, when he enters into this Red-Sea, all his iniquities are drowned and aboliſhed. Thus *Micah* ſweetly deſcribes that gracious act of Pardoning of Sins, *Chap.* vii. 19. *He will ſubdue our iniquities, and caſt all our ſins into the depth of the Sea.* This *Paul* calls a *burying in Baptiſm.* Our ſins are over-whelmed in the Water of Baptiſm; the Sea of Chriſt's blood ſwallows them up.

2. Water hath a power of quenching; and ſuch a ſpiritual vertue there is in Baptiſm, it allays the heat of our natural concupiſcence, quenches and extinguiſhes the boylings and inflammations of our ſinful luſts. The ambitious and covetous deſires of the world, the carnal deſires of the fleſh, the inſatiable thirſtings of our ſouls after ſinful pleaſures: this Grace, which Baptiſm miniſters to us, if we make uſe of it, are all quenched by it.

3. Water, 'tis a cleanſing Element, it waſhes away filthineſs, and ſo

A so doth Baptiſm; it purges a Sinner from all defilements of fleſh and ſpirit, *Epheſ.* iv 26. *Chriſt ſanctifies his Church, and cleanſeth it with the waſhing of Water by the Word.* Thus Chriſt compares his *Church to a flock of Sheep, that come up from the waſhing,* Cant iv. 2. The vertue of this Sacrament, *Ezekiel* foretels, *I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and you ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs,* Chap. xxxvi. 25.

4. Water hath a fructifying virtue in it; 'tis a fruitful Element, and makes other things fruitful. *Let the Waters bring forth abundantly,* Gen. i. 20. So this Sacrament by Divine inſtitution, and
B benediction, 'tis a Fountain of living Water, a Font, and Laver of regeneration. Newneſs of life, we draw from hence, from our ſpiritual Baptiſm: As it is ſaid of the Waters of the Sanctuary, *Ezek.* xlvii. 9. *Every thing ſhall live whither the River cometh.* See how abundantly theſe waters brought forth. Three thouſand were baptized and renewed in one day. That's the action: Then

2. The relation of it, which enlivens the action, and makes it effectual is, that it muſt be done *in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt.* What means that? I can but touch it.

1. *In his Name,* that is, by his Authority. He alone can inſtitute
C a Sacrament, he alone can make the Seal, that muſt confirm his Covenant; As not the Higheſt Officer in the Kingdom hath power to authorize a publick Seal of Office, 'tis an act of ſupreme and ſovereign Authority.

2. *In his Name*; that is, *Be Baptized in the Faith of Jeſus his Name, through Faith in his Name,* ſo St. *Peter* expounds it, Acts iii. 16. A Sacrament without Faith, is a Seal to a Blank: When the Eunuch ſued to be baptized, *Philip* ſtrictly exacts Faith of him; *What doth hinder me to be baptized? If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt,* Acts viii. 36, 37.

D 3. *In the Name of Jeſus Chriſt,* that is, in the ſolemn and holy profeſſion of Chriſt, into his Religion, into the fellowſhip and communion of his holy profeſſion. In Baptiſm we take upon us Chriſt's Cognizance and Livery. We then openly vouch our ſelves to become his ſervants, renounce all other dependances, teſtifie to the world, that we are his followers. *Nicodemus* his night-addreſſes will not ſerve the turn; the Goſpel calls us to a publick engagement. When that great Oratour, *Victorinus*, told a Biſhop privately, that he was become a Chriſtian, the Biſhop told him, he would not believe him, till he ſaw him make a ſolemn profeſſion in the
E face of the Church. *What?* ſaid he, *Do the Church-walls make a Chriſtian?* The Biſhop ſtill held him to it, and ſo brought him to his publick profeſſion.

We have done with the firſt Particular of the Text, the means, which St. *Peter* preſcribes them; Now,

Secondly, Take notice briefly of the benefits, which upon the uſe of this means he doth aſſure them; And they are two.

I. *Re-*

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I. *Remiſſion of ſins.*
II. *Receiving the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.*

I. *Remiſſion of ſins.* And this will appear,

1. A ſeaſonable benefit.
2. A full and compleat benefit.

1. *Forgiveneſs of ſins*, 'twill be moſt ſeaſonable and welcome to them. Men in their caſe and perplexity, had rather hear of the pardon of their ſins, then that all the goods of the world ſhould betide them. Indeed, while we are at eaſe, and our ſins ſtir not, while our conſcience lies aſleep, and doth not affright us, we account it but ſlight news, but cold comfort to tell us that Chriſt came to pardon our ſins. If *Peter* come to us as to the lame Cripple, *Acts* iii. 6. and ſay, *Silver and Gold have I none*, but I can ſhew thee a courſe to obtain pardon of thy ſin; we can ſlight him, and his Offer. Let ſuch liſten to him, that ſtand in need of him. But to a contrite broken-hearted Sinner, no tidings like to this, to tell him, and aſſure him, his ſins are forgiven him. *David*'s repentance will witneſs this, *Pſal.* xxxii. 3. The guilt of his ſins cauſed him to roar all the day long. Being in that caſe, what is that above all things in the world he moſt eſteemed and longed for? You may learn, that by this Exclamation, *O! bleſſed is the man, whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered; Bleſſed is the man unto whom the* LORD *imputeth not iniquity.* That bleſſing is the main priviledg and portion of the Church. *The people that dwell therein, ſhall be forgiven their iniquity*, Eſa. xxxiii. 24. 'Tis the only Sanctuary and City of Refuge. St. *Auguſtine* compares it to that ſanctuary, or *Aſylum*, that *Romulus* ſets up for all malefactors; *Noſtræ civitatis aſylum eſt vera remiſſio peccatorum.* This mercy, 'tis the ſinful ſouls Sanctuary and City of Refuge. Other means may ſtupifie, and benum our conſcience, and lay it aſleep; only this aſſurance can truly and effectually quiet and comfort it, *Thy ſins are forgiven thee.*

2. This mercy here promiſed is a full compleat comfort: 'Tis *remiſſion of ſins*, in the plural number. They were charged by St. *Peter* only with one ſin, the murdering of Chriſt, and their conſciences accordingly were troubled with the guilt of that ſin: And yet St. *Peter* here aſſures them of the pardon, and forgiveneſs of all their ſins. I; God's mercy and true repentance, and the grace of baptiſm, pardons compleatly, leaves no ſin upon the ſcore, forgives all. As in bodily cures, when Chriſt caſt out one Devil, he caſt out all; ſeven Devils out of *Mary Magdalen*; a whole legion of Devils, left not one remaining: So, when he pardons one ſin, he forgives all.

1. God's love, 'tis not partial and imperfect pardoning ſome, and reteining others. God compounds not with his debtors, as men do for half; but remits the whole debt. He bids us not blot out an hundred, and ſet down fifty upon our account; but forgives the whole ſum, though ten thouſand talents.

2. And then repentance, though it be occaſioned by ſome one

A one ſin, yet it bewayls all, deteſts all, forſakes all. A good Chriſtian will leave no ſin unrepented of. *Quod propter Deum fit, æqualiter fit.* He that ſorrows for one offence againſt God, will ſorrow for all. As he that breaks one Commandement, breaks all; ſo he that truly ſorrows for one ſin, will repent of all. *David* bemoaning his murder and adultery, bewayls his original and birth-ſin too; *I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my Mother conceive me.*

3. The grace of Baptiſm doth not only ſeal up the actual remiſſion of our by-paſt ſins; but it hath a force even for the pardoning of the ſins of our whole life. Not, that all our ſins paſt, B preſent, and to come, are actually all forgiven in Baptiſm; but, becauſe in our Baptiſm God ſeals up that Covenant, by which he aſſures us, he will pardon all our ſins upon our repentance; and thus the force of Baptiſm reaches to the pardon of future ſins. After the people had paſſed to the Red-Sea, and again ſinned in the Wilderneſs, God commanded them to return again to the Red-Sea, *Numb.* xiv. 25. So, after our Baptiſm, when we ſin againſt God, he ſends us back to the penitent and faithful remembrance of our Baptiſm. The vertue of that Covenant will afford us pardon.

C II. Come we to the ſecond Benefit, that's *The receiving the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.* Not, but that the work of Repentance, and the grace of Baptiſm come all from the Spirit: and therefore this laſt promiſe gives not the firſt ſtock of grace, but doth increaſe and improve it. *Non inchoat ſua dona, ſed cumulat,* ſaith *Leo.*

To paſs by many things obſervable in the words;

1. Grace is a Gift, not inbred in us, not deſerved or purchaſed by us.

2. We muſt receive it; we are only paſſive and receptive of grace. The Spirit is the only agent, we are but receivers of the gift D of grace.

To paſs by theſe: conſider only theſe two things;

1. The order.

2. The nature of this gift.

1. The order; and that ſtands thus,

Repent and be baptized, and then *receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.* Firſt, here is cleanſing required, and then beautifying. Before the Spirit comes to reſide and dwell in us, we muſt by repentance and faith prepare a fit manſion and reſting-place for it. What Chriſt ſaith of the evil ſpirit in a wicked man, *Matth.* xii. may be ſaid of the holy E Spirit in the heart of a penitent and faithful Chriſtian; when he findes the houſe of the ſoul clean, and ſwept, and garniſhed, then he comes and brings with him ſeven other ſpirits of grace, and dwells in him. *Res delicata eſt Spiritus Dei,* ſaith *Tertullian.* The Holy Ghoſt abhors uncleanneſs, will not come near to a defiled ſoul. *Omnia inquinamenta, pœnitentia verrens, & radens, & foras ejiciens, mundam pectoris domum ſuperventuro ſpiritui parat, quò ſe cum omnibus*

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bus donis libens ingerat, Tertull. Repentance ſweeps the houſe, carries out all filth; that ſo the Holy Ghoſt may enter into us. That's the order. Conſider,

2. The nature of this gift. The gifts of the Holy Ghoſt were of two ſorts.

1. Thoſe that are uſually called *gratis data*, gifts tending to edification of others; as tongues and other Miniſterial enablements. They were the gifts of this day, but not the only gifts.

2. Others are gifts of perſonal concernment, for the good of the receivers, to further their ſalvation. And theſe were promiſed and beſtowed on this day. I will name them in a threefold expreſſion.

(1.) The grace of Sanctification, that was the gift and benefit of this day. That was reſerved till this time for the plenty of it. *Joh.* vii. 38. *He that believes in me, out of his belly ſhall flow Rivers of living waters.* Verſ. 39. *This he ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him, ſhould receive. For the Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe that Jeſus was not yet glorified.* Sprinklings of grace there were before, but the effuſions of Grace were reſerved till now.

(2.) The grace of Obſignation and Sealing, that was the work and gift of the Spirit, that came this day. This is one great office of the Holy Ghoſt, to ratifie and ſeal up to us the forgiveneſs of our ſins, and all the benefits of our redemption. *Epheſ.* i. 13. *In whom, after you believed, ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe. Grieve not the Holy Spirit, by which ye are ſealed*, Epheſ iv. 30.

(3.) The grace of conſolation; that's another work and gift of the Spirit, that was alſo the gift of this day. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall ſend you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth.*

1. In regard of our Sanctification, ſo the Holy Ghoſt is *ſpirituale robur*, a gift of grace enabling us.

2. In reſpect of our aſſurance, ſo he is *ſigillum*, a ſeal confirming us.

3. In reſpect of comfort and conſolation, ſo he is *oſculum*, the kiſs of love and peace, to rejoyce and comfort us.

And this aſſurance that *Peter* gives them of their receiving the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, it will afford us a threefold meditation.

See here;

1. *Charitatem Petri*; his earneſt deſire to have the gift of the Spirit communicated to them. He doth not deſire to have it reſtrained, and appropriated to himſelf, and his fellow-Apoſtles; but hopes and deſires that others ſhould ſhare in it. Many a man would ſay, "Let "them be pardoned, and their ſins forgiven them; but for theſe glo- "rious gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, let them reſt on us; as Apoſtolical "Preachers. No, the Spirit of God in St. *Peter* is of a diffuſive, and communicating nature, deſirous that others be partakers with him. *Joſhua* was a little envious in this kinde. When *Eldad* and *Medad* propheſied, he would have *Moſes* prohibit them. What ſaith *Moſes?*

Envieſt

A *Envieſt thou for my ſake? I would to God, that all the people did prophe-*
ſie, and that the LORD *would put his Spirit upon them*, Numb. xi. 29. 'Twas *Paul*'s wiſh to *Agrippa*, *I would to God, not only thou, but all that hear me this day, were both almoſt, and altogether ſuch as I am.* How ready were the Apoſtles to Miniſter this gift of the Spirit upon all occaſions? When *Philip* had converted the *Samaritans*, Acts viii. preſently *Peter* and *John* haſted to *Samaria* to lay their hands on thoſe Converts, that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt. When *Paul* came to *Epheſus*, his firſt Queſtion was, *Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince*
B *you believed? And forthwith he laid his hands upon them, and ſo the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon them.* There is no better ſign of grace, then the deſires of working grace in another. See here,

2. The bounty of God; whom he pardons, thoſe he enriches and ſtores with grace. Theſe poor ſinners would be glad of pardon. God will not only pardon them, but alſo enrich them with his choicer gifts. The *Roman* Story tells us of a *Roman* Senatour, that having railed on the Emperour *Auguſtus*, came next day and beg'd his pardon; which *Auguſtus* granted him; but then the Senatour added, *No man will be-*
lieve you have forgiven me, except you will beſtow ſome great gift upon
C *me*; and accordingly the Emperour gave him a rich and a bountiful gift to aſſure him of pardon. 'Tis ſo with us; to aſſure us of mercy, God enriches us with grace. As the loving Father receives his returning Prodigal; not only receives him, but embraces him. *He doth abundantly above all that we can ask or think*; gives us what our Prayers dare not preſume to ask.

3. Learn here the duty and obligation of a penitent. *Donum obligat ad officium.* If God beſtows this gift on us; that very gift obliges us to uſe it. We muſt not be content to have our ſins pardoned, but we muſt ſet our ſelves to perform better obedience. The Prodigal ſues not only for forgiveneſs, but craves employment; *Make me as one of*
D *thy hired ſervants*, enable me to ſerve thee, put me into thy ſervice; grant me the talents of thy grace, that I may redeem my ill-ſpent time by gaining glory to Thee.

TWENTY

SERMONS

PREACHED

At ſundry Times, upon ſeveral other

SUBJECTS.

TWENTY

SERMONS

PREACHED

At Hanley Times, upon several other

SUBJECTS.

A SERMON ON

ACTS xvi. 33.

He waſhed their ſtripes.

AS this whole Book (the Annals of the Church, indeed, not ſo much the Acts, as the Sufferings of the Apoſtles, the Churches-Martyrologie, as that) in general, ſo in a ſpecial manner this preſent Chapter, 'tis a relation of that ſucceſs, and entertainment, which the preaching of the Apoſtles had in publiſhing the Goſpel. And ſo, by proportion, conceive it as a lively repreſentation of that ſucceſs, that the Miniſtry of the Goſpel ſhall uſually finde, even to the end of the world.

First, Here is *Philippi*, a famous and populous City, (and Λαὸς πολὺς ἐν πόλει, ſhould be God's proportion, *Acts* xviii. 10. God ſhould have much people in a great City.)

Secondly, Here is St. *Paul* a powerful Preacher, σάλπιγξ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, as the Father calls him. And yet what is the gain of all his labour? How many in our City ſhall be ſaved? ſaith he of his *Antioch*, *Moleſtum eſt, quod dicam, non eſt in tot millibus centeſimum invenire*; the fruit and improvement of all his Preaching, is the converſion of a poor Purple-ſeller, and a wretched Gaoler. *Apud Coriarium* Petrus, *apud purpurariam* Paulus, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*. A Tanner believes, and receives St. *Peter*; a Purple-ſeller liſtens, and obeyes St. *Paul*. Few, contemptible, weak, deſpiſed things are the ſpoils and Triumphs of the Goſpel. *O nova vocationis principia!* ſaith the Father, of Chriſt's Converts: *Vocavit Publicanum, poſt hunc meretricem; poſt hanc latronem; poſt hunc blaſphemum:* Publicans, Gaolers, Harlots, Murderers, Blaſphemers, are the firſt-fruits of the Goſpel.

In ſpecial, here are three varieties of Auditors, that St. *Paul*'s Preaching findes in *Philippi*; and in them you may take a view of the ſeveral ſucceſs and entertainment of our Preaching.

Firſt, Here is *Lydia religioſa*, Verſe 14. A devout Woman, of holy

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holy Education, a worshipper of God according to the *Jews* Religion. She is prepared and fitted under that *Pædagogie*. Pious Education under the publick Worship hath accommodated her, and so she is more easily and speedily converted. *Cor aperuit*; one Sermon of St. *Paul* opened her heart presently. The being born and trained up within the compass and means of Grace, doth facilitate and dispose us to a more speedy conversion. That's the first kinde of Auditours; *Lydia religiosa.*

Secondly, Here is *Commentariensis*, the Gaoler, a prophane, barbarous Man, a savage torturer of the Apostles. And to fit and prepare him for conversion, here is a mighty earthquake; the very foundations of the Prison are shaken, himself struck with horrour and amazement. he trembles, despairs, is ready to foredo himself; and then, at last, is recovered out of the very jaws of Hell. *Titio ereptus*, a brand catch'd out of the fire, and so brought to conversion.

Prophane, barbarous Men, are not usually saved without terrour and affrightment. As *Chrysostome*, alluding to *Paul*'s threatening of *Elymas*, *Thou shalt be blinde for a time*: "Mark, saith the Father, "he layes the same plaister to *Elymas*, that cured himself. First he was struck with blindness and horrour, that fitted him for a saving conversion. Obstinate, obdurate, barbarous Sinners, they are not only dead in sins and trespasses; but buryed in a Sepulchre hewen out of a rock, thundring and earthquakes must quicken and arouse them.

Religious *Lydia*, a gentle still voyce, one word of St. *Paul* melts her heart. *O virtus Sermonis! quasi quiddam intra, ut hamus, aut uncinus trahit*: there was a secret attractive power in one word of St. *Paul*; *Believe in the Lord*, perswades her presently. I, but thou must sharpen thy wedges, and redouble thy blows to split in sunder the knotty hardness of this wretched Gaoler. *Chordæ in cithara uno quidem plectro, sed non uno impulsu sunt feriendæ*, saith *Gregory*. It was the same hand, but not a like stroke converted both of them. And that's a second kinde of Auditours, a prophane Gaoler.

Thirdly, Here are *Cives avari, & ambitiosi*, Verse 19. A third sort of Auditours is the main body of the City, the Magistrates and Citizens, men set upon gain and ambition; they reject St. *Paul*, nay, oppose him, nay, they imprison and persecute him.

I. The Magistrates, they have their plea against him, *ritus & consuetudines*, Verse 21. breach of customs and antient orders, that enrages them. This new Gospel breeds nothing but new-fangledness and sedition, that's their objection. And then,

II. The Citizens they put in their Plea, *Spes lucri*, Verse 19. the hope of gain in gone; a servant possessed with a gainful and profitable Devil, that brought much advantage to her Masters (suppose a cunning, over-reaching Apprentice or Factour) the casting out of that Devil, the conversion of such a servant, it stirs up Persecution. *Nec Deo, nec Dæmoni credunt*, saith *Chrysostome*. Though God authorize *Paul*, and the Devil give testimony to him, *these are the servants of the most high*

A *high God*, yet they regard neither God nor Devil, but Covetouſneſs and Ambition. Oh! this is a dumb and a deaf Devil, there is no charming of it.

And thus you have a ſhort view of thoſe three varieties of St. *Paul*'s Auditours; Devout *Lydia* preſently ſaved by a gentle perſwaſion; a barbarous Gaoler wrought upon by fear and aſtoniſhment, and driven to Converſion: but covetous and ambitious Worldings, the loſs of gain and breaking of cuſtoms, enrages them to malicious perſecution.

Who can order or reſtrain, the breathings of God's Spirit? The Doctors of the *Jews* contemn *Paul*, and deſpiſe him; *Lydia*, a Diſciple
B of theirs, liſtens and believes him. Again, civil men, Citizens, and Magiſtrates reject and perſecute him; a ſavage Gaoler, he trembles and believes him. An Apoſtle betrayes Chriſt, an Harlot anoints him. The Emperour impriſons *Paul* and beheads him, when his Ganymede and his Concubine, hear and obey him. The Tribunals of Magiſtrates, the Temple of Juſtice is now turned into a Den of Thieves; and the Priſon, the ſink of Villany, is conſecrate to a Temple. *Domus Diaboli carcer, in qua familiam ſuam continet*, ſaith *Tertullian*: *Sed vos ideo in carcerem veniſtis, ut illum in domo ſua conculcetis.* Being in bonds, ſee how he layes ſiege to this hold of Satan: The power of his Miniſtery
C breaks through all reſiſtances; as the Father ſweetly applies the *Prophet Eſai*'s words, *The gates of Braſs ſhall open unto him, and the bars of Iron ſhall be broken in ſunder* by a ſtrange engine, with ſinging of Pſalms, like the ſiege of *Jericho*, with the blowing of Trumpets. "Strange, "ſaith a Father, *Myſteria magis putantur conſummare, quàm bella*; Re"ligious Ceremonies, not warlike Inſtruments, wrought this victory.

Purpoſely *Paul* becomes a Priſoner, that he might ſubdue Satan in his own fortreſs. As *Chryſoſtome* obſerves, that it was a ſpecial providence, that *Paul* ſhould be ſent to *Rome* in bonds, becauſe the *Jews* were baniſhed and forbid the City. As a free-man he could not, but
D his chains and impriſonment were his advantage to convert the *Romans*: he imitates his Maſter. *Chriſtus in Cruce Latronem ex vulnere baptizavit*; the Croſs was a fit place to convert a Thief, and his blood a convenient Laver to baptize a Murtherer: So here, St. *Paul*'s ſtripes and impriſonment are his fitteſt opportunity to convert this Gaoler.

In whoſe converſion and new-birth, three things offer themſelves as moſt obſerveable.

1. *Antecedentia converſionis*; an earth-quake, and by it fear and aſtoniſhment; and thoſe are *dolores ante partum*, the pains and anguiſhes before his birth.

E 2. *Converſio ipſa*; *Paul*'s preaching, his believing, and baptizing; that's *partus ipſe*, the new-birth it ſelf.

3. *Conſequentia converſionis*; he rejoyced, *He waſhed their ſtripes*, he fed and embraced them; and that's *gaudium poſt partum*, the joyfull conſequence of his regeneration.

My Text contains one clauſe and member of this latter part, *He waſhed their ſtripes*. A mean, contemptible action in ordinary eſteem,

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and yet valuable in God's account, and put upon record for eternal memory. "How many Queens are forgotten, ſaith the Father, when "poor *Priſcilla*, for refreſhing of *Paul*, hath an honourable remem- "brance! The vain munificence of many Kings and Judges is buryed "in oblivion, whereas this poor charity of the Gaoler ſtands for ever "regiſtred. A

It was the Gaoler and his wife, as *Chryſoſtome* conceits it, whom by the name of *Euodias* and *Syntiche*, St. *Paul* enrolls in the book of life, Phil. iv. 2. *Whereſoever this Goſpel ſhall be preached*, ſaith our Saviour: See the meaneſt relief done to Chriſt, and his members, hath a Patent of eternity. A little Manna, but a vaniſhing Meteor, lay it up in the Ark, it never putrifies. The cheapeſt alms to Chriſt and his Church, the memory of it ſhall never be aboliſh'd. *Neque actionis vilitas, neque perſonæ indignitas, neque loci obſcuritas*, ſaith the Father, *Neither the meanneſs of the action, nor the vileneſs of the perſon, nor the baſeneſs of the place, ſhall ever obſcure it.* B

For the purpoſe of the Words, conceive them to be an holy action of this Convert, following upon, and ſo manifeſting and expreſſing the truth of his Converſion. A few words, a ſmall action in appearance, and yet a powerful evidence of his new-birth. This ſmall work, dipt and colour'd in the blood of *Paul*, appears like that red thread on the hand of the new born childe, as a teſtimony of his birth-right. And ſtands here upon record and hangs, like *Rahab*'s ſcarlet thread, faſtned on his houſe, as a pledg of his ſalvation. "Indeed, as *Baſil* "ſpeaks, 'tis his firſt ſacrifice of thanks, he offers for his converſion; "a ſacrifice ὐ δια πυρὸς, ἀλλὰ δια κρυὸς ὁλοκαρπώθεν, *an whole burnt-offering, and yet not by fire, but by water kindled and enflamed.* C

That we may fully conceive, how this waſhing of their ſtripes doth evidence, and demonſtrate the truth of his converſion, pleaſe you to take notice of it in theſe following conſiderations; all which we will reduce to theſe two diſtinct reſpects; D

Firſt, Conceive this action of his, *reſpectu principii à quo*, in reſpect of his perſon, that doth exerciſe and perform it: as it ariſes from him and is his action, *He waſhed them.*

Secondly, *Reſpectu objecti, circa quod*; as it reſpects the Apoſtles, towards whom he performs it, *He waſhed their ſtripes.*

Firſt take a view of it *reſpectu principii*, in reſpect of the Agent, that acts and performs it; as it was a work of this new Convert.

For more full conceiving and underſtanding of it, obſerve, That in the firſt calling or converſion of a ſinner, there are three powerful ſeeds and principles of Grace wrought into his heart: The E

Firſt Is *principium fidei*, a Principle and ſeed of Faith.

Second Is *principium pœnitentiæ*, a Principle of Repentance.

Third Is *principium renovationis*, a Principle and ſeed of new life and Renovation. And from theſe *three ſeeds* and *Principles* of *Converſion*, we will deduce the *nature* and *original* of this *Convert's* action.

Firſt, *Reſpectu fidei*; Look firſt upon him, as a man quickned and enliven'd

A enliven'd with a Principle of Faith; and then conceive this action of his as 'tis *opus fidei*, a fruit of his Faith. So soon as he believed, presently the same hour *he washed their stripes*. And the Observation hence is briefly thus much:

That a true Believer is readily and presently a religious worker. Faith, 'tis no still, silent, contemplative Virtue; but 'tis active and operative, puts forth it self into all acts of Piety. 'Tis not a Frontlet to thine eyes only in Illumination, but 'tis a Tablet on thine hands for employment and action. *The work of Faith, and labour of Love*, St. *Paul* unites them, and they are never asunder: and that upon a threefold ground.

B I. *Ratione veritatis fidei*; is not thy Faith active and operative? 'tis no true Faith, 'tis but fained and counterfeit.

II. *Ratione usûs fidei*; without this action and exercise, 'tis vain and unprofitable.

III. *Ratione acceptationis fidei*; except thy Faith be fruitful and effectual, 'tis no way acceptable.

I. *Ratione veritatis.* The very life and being of Faith makes it naturally working. *Impetu quodam, & impulsu erumpunt bona opera*, saith *Luther* excellently. Doest thou believe? Good works do naturally and powerfully break out. They are called the fruits of Faith; and C fruits you know naturally blossome and spring: 'tis dead at the root, that's barren and fruitless. As at the beginning the LORD created trees with fruit on them, not a trunk, or a stock, but flourishing and abundant; so in our new creation, the Tree of Faith, 'tis presently furnished with the fruit of Piety. See how suddenly, in this Convert, the Seed-time, and the Spring, and Harvest do follow each other. *Sementis heri, hodierna messis*, saith *Chrysostome* of his Auditours, *simul & semen recipit, & aristam exhibet, non est natura, quæ cunctatur, sed gratia, quæ accelerat.* The seed, the blade, the ripe-corn, and all in an instant. A lively Faith, it longs to be working, like St. *John*'s Con- D verts, seeks employment presently, *What shall I do?* Deny it working, you deprive it of being; like the Soul, it stayes no longer in the body, then it may act and quicken it; hinder the actions of life, it forsakes us presently. The speech of *Rachel*, 'tis the voyce of Faith, *Give me children, or I die.* 'Tis earnest for conception, and as ready for delivery, like the *Hebrew* women, strong to bring forth, and rejoycing to see her first-born, and calls him *Gad*, a *Company comes*.

It abhors those unkindly conceptions, that are never brought forth, but at the death of the Mother; they must have *carnifices obstetrices*, as *Tertullian* speaks, and *testamentariam prolem*; nothing, but their E death, can bring forth their good deeds. No, a true Faith no sooner lives, but is stirring presently; as it is able, shews it self in some work or word, that may demonstrate the truth of it's being. The Thief on the Cross could do nothing, but because he believed, therefore he spake in confession and exhortation. If the childe be still-born, we give it for dead; if it cryes, sends forth any voyce, there is life in it, and hope of it. O, let thine heart by Faith be bathed and warmed in

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the blood of Christ, and thou mayst as well keep the fire from burning, and the Sun from shining, and the heavens from moving, as true Faith from working. *Flammas suas intra pectus cohibere non potest*, saith the Father; it cannot keep close this fire in the heart; enforces good deeds upon all that comes near it: like *Lydia* here, *If you have counted me faithful, enter into mine house*; ἠ παρεβιάσατο ἡμᾶς, she is violently importunate. This is natural and necessary, saith St. *Augustine*, *Qui aliud credit, aliud sperat, aliud amat, necesse est, ut aliter vivat.* Thy Faith will naturally flow forth into action. And that's the first ground of it, *ratione veritatis*, 'tis no true faith, except it be operative. A

II. *Ratione usus*; Except thy Faith be lively and working, 'tis an unuseful Faith, altogether *unprofitable*. Τί τὸ ὄφελος, saith St. *James*: What doth an idle conceit, and notion of Faith profit, or advantage thee, *if thou have no works? Sine bonis operibus nihil sibi per fidei supercilium*, saith *Salvian*; it procures thee nothing. *Justificat, purgat, salvat*; the three proper employments of Faith, and the fruitless Faith performs none of them. B

1. *Non salvat*; that St. *James* assures thee of, *Chap.* ii. 14. *It cannot save him.* The working Faith, though it do not purchase heaven, yet it effectually procures it: *Non vendit meritis, sed dabit laboribus*; it abhors works as merits, embraces them as means. It runs into neither extremity that Popery would place it in: *Aut malis operibus, Diabolum referre, aut bonis operibus Deum esse*, as *Luther* spake worthily. C

2. *Non purgat*; 'Tis not light, but heat that purges and purifies; not a contemplative notion swimming in the brain, but, as *Oecumenius* describes it, 'tis *consecutio ex affectu procedens*, a devoted affection seated in the heart. Nay:

3. *Non justificat*; 'Tis only the working Faith, that obtains thy pardon: in this case though Faith be actually destitute, yet 'tis such a Faith as will be industrious. God gives Grace unto it, as to a poor Beggar, but not as to a lazie one; and Faith receives it with an empty hand, but not with an idle one. A withered hand, as it cannot work, so it cannot stretch out it self to receive an Alms. And an emortuous Faith, as it cannot put forth the hands in the works of Piety, so neither is it able to lift up its hands to sue for Mercy. As good no Faith, as never the better for it. *Fides infelix bonum, si infructuosum; malo nullam fidem, quàm vanam; quid prodest esse, quod non prodest?* it is a bootless Faith, if it be a fruitless Faith, saith *Tertullian* sweetly. D

II. *Ratione acceptationis*: Except thy Faith be active and operative, 'tis no way acceptable. In this case, as thine outward services without inward Faith, like the Emperour's *excors sacrificum*, his sacrifice that had no heart in it, are prodigious and loathsome; so the inwards of Faith, without the body and substance of Works, are offals and refuse. "God, saith *Gregory*, requires not only *pectus fidei*, "but *armum dextrum*; not only the shake-breast of Faith, but the "heave-shoulder and arm of Obedience: Before thou believest, God E

freely

A freely forgives thee even all thine evil works; but, when thou believeſt, he ſtrictly exacts the performance of good. *Peccatoribus principalem ſortem remittit*, ſaith the Father, *à juſtis etiam uſuras exigit.* In thy converſion, he forgives the main ſtock and forfeiture; but, after thy converſion, he ſtrictly requires both uſe and principal. And that's a third enforcement of my firſt Obſervation, as this action of the Gaoler ariſes from the firſt Principle of Converſion: the ſeed of Faith, 'tis *opus fidei*; a true Believer is chearfully and readily a religious worker.

Conceive this action of *Waſhing their ſtripes*,

Secondly, *Reſpectu principii pœnitentiæ*, as ariſing from a ſecond
B ſeed of Grace wrought in converſion, the principle of Repentance. Before his converſion, he uſed them cruelly, whipt and laſhed the bodies of theſe Saints, thruſts them into a Dungeon, faſtens them in the Stocks, layes chains and bolts on them; now, that he is converted and brought to repentance, he is glad to waſh and bath their bodies, that he tortured; now he enlarges them, feeds and refreſhes them. And the Obſervation from hence is thus much:

Repentance, it makes us undo all, that we did before. It enforces us to befool our ſelves, look back upon all our actions with grief and ſorrow; makes us wiſh and deſire, we had never committed them. How
C did this Gaoler now *ſmite on his thigh*, as the Prophet ſpeaks? How did he queſtion with himſelf, and upbraid his folly, *What have I done?* This is the nature and property of true repentance, 'tis *conatus infectum reddendi quod factum eſt*, as ſome School-men define it, an undoing of our former deeds. Τῆ βίᾳ ὑστεροβουλία, as St. *Baſil* expreſſes it: a retractation, and review, and reverſing of all our former life. It deals with our ſins, as *Moſes* with the Calf that the *Iſraelites* made, *He took their ſin, the ſin that they made, and he brake it in pieces, and ground it to duſt, and caſt it into the water, and made them drink the very powder of it:* So Repentance, it takes all thy former ſins, and by contrition
D grinds them to powder, and then mingles it with the tears of ſorrow, and makes us drink and ſuck up the dregs of it. *Oh! what fruit have you of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* ſaith Repentance to thee, when thou conſidereſt thy former errours; here is the ſucceſs and profit of all your ſinning.

If thou beeſt deſperate, run on, ſpare not, purchaſe and treaſure up wrath to thy ſelf; but if thou meaneſt ever to be ſaved, thou muſt rip up and unravel thy whole life again; thou muſt go over with ſorrow and vexation, all thoſe wanderings and turnings of thy former tranſgreſſions. Thou that didſt carry out the ſeed of ſin, and wenteſt out
E rejoycing, ſhalt bring back thy ſheaves and burdens of ſorrow, and return home weeping.

Oh then! in the beginning of thy life, when thou firſt ſetteſt out, aim right and adviſedly, leſt at the long-run thou befool thy ſelf. Learn this Leſſon, ye wiſe fore-plotters of what you undertake, that account it your wiſdom in all other buſineſs not to be miſtaken; that judge it a point of folly to excuſe your ſelves with a *Non putavi*. Happy be you

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you that have your action in your hand, and may take a true level. This is the fore-counſel of Repentance to thee. It perſwades and fore warns, as St. *Paul* did the Mariners, *Acts* xxvii. *Undertake not this deſperate voyage, it will be much dammage of your goods and lives.* But if thou wilt on for all this warning, then comes Repentance with an after-counſel, as the ſame St. *Paul*, *Sirs, you ſhould have been adviſed by me, and ſo you ſhould have gained this harm and loſs.*

What madneſs is this then, to dare to ſin upon preſumption of after-repentance? Thou wilt ſin, becauſe thou ſhalt repent again; that is, *I will do it, becauſe I muſt do it:* Thou wilt tie knots with thy fingers, that thou muſt be forced to untie with thy teeth: Thou wilt ſwallow down that for a little pleaſure, and delight of thy Palate, which if it prove not thy bane, thou muſt vomit up again with the rending of thy bowels: Thou wilt drive and rivet in theſe nails, becauſe thou muſt toil to pull them out again: Thou wilt ſtab and wound thy ſelf, becauſe with torture and anguiſh, thou muſt cure thy ſelf again: Thou wilt hate and perſecute a Chriſtian, ſcourge and tare the body of St. *Paul*; Why, if ever thou beeſt ſaved, thou muſt be glad to bath and cure thoſe wounds and ſtripes, to kiſs thoſe feet, and waſh with thy tears, which before thou haſt faſtened in the Stocks, and loaded with Fetters. And that's the ſecond Obſervation, as this action of the Gaoler ariſes from the ſecond principle of Grace, the ſeed of Repentance; he waſhes now, where he wounded before: *Repentance makes us undo what we did before.*

Conſider this action of the Gaoler in *waſhing their ſtripes*, as ariſing from,

Thirdly, A third Principle of Grace wrought in converſion, and that's *principium novæ vitæ*, or *renovationis*, as it ſprings from a ſeed and principle of Renovation. And ſo tis an evidence and fruit of the changing and reforming his former life, and that in three ſeveral Conſiderations:

I. It is an evidence of Renovation, *reſpectu naturæ, & diſpoſitionis.* This waſhing and cheriſhing the Apoſtles, it evidences the renewing and changing of his Nature and former diſpoſition. Before his Calling and Converſion, he was a cruel, barbarous, hard-harted man, a tormenter of the Apoſtles; Now, that the Spirit of God hath ſeiſed upon him, and entred into him, ſee, he is preſently become a meek, a merciful, tender-hearted, campaſſionate man, he waſhes and baths their ſtripes, he feeds and refreſhes them. And from hence take notice of this Obſervation:

That Grace and Religion, it mollifies, intenerates, it changes and ſweetens the profaneſt Natures, and moſt barbarous Diſpoſitions. This Gaoler, before a ſavage perſecutour, like the *Dæmoniack* in the Goſpel, exceeding fierce, no man could tame him, now behold him diſpoſſeſſed of his fury, he ſits at Chriſt's feet peaceable and gentle.

Religion, it perſwades us, and woes us, in St. *Paul*'s Language, Coloſſ. iii. 12. *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels*

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A *bowels of mercy, kindneſs, meekneſs.* Behold this Gaoler by his calling and Baptiſm, transformed into the Similitude of Chriſt at his Baptiſm. To ſhew the meekneſs, that Chriſtianity works in us, *Agnum demonſtravit Columba*, he becomes a Lamb, and a Dove reſts upon him. *Quod Agnus in animalibus, hoc Columba in avibus, ſumma utriuſque innocentia, ſumma manſuetudo, ſumma ſimplicitas.* Before his Converſion, he was a Tyger and Vulture, now Grace makes him as a Lamb and a Dove.

When *Eliſha* anointed *Hazael*, the Prophet wept to foreſee his barbarous diſpoſition, *Thou ſhalt rip up the bellies of the women with child.*

B Now *Paul* baptizes this Gaoler, how did it joy him to ſee! *Oh, thou ſhalt waſh the Saints, comfort and refreſh them.* O! the power of God's mercy and grace, to pardon, and purge, and transform ſuch a Sinner. *Mille accuſationes, mille carnifices, ad nutum Regis omnes dimittuntur*, all preſently aboliſhed. *Si dixero adultero, Nolo, ut adulter ſit: verba ſtatim vertuntur in opera*, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*: One word of Chriſt transforms him preſently. Thus St. *Paul*, before his Converſion a bloody perſecutour, he made havock of the Church; Grace makes him preſently a moſt compaſſionate Preacher. This makes *Bernard* admire the effectual power of God's grace in St. *Paul*'s Converſion,

C *O magnitudinem miſericordiæ! O efficaciam gratiæ!* that Mercy would, and Grace could alter and mollifie ſuch a barbarous Sinner!

This is the admirable power of Religion, altering and changing us above all other means. Education, Laws, Magiſtrates, may ſuppreſs for a time; but 'tis Grace alone, that can throughly and effectually turn and transform us. Like the Woman with the Bloody Iſſue, thou mayeſt ſpend all upon Phyſicians, civil and moral means, to ſubdue thy nature, and be little the better; the leaſt touch of the hem of Chriſt's garment will convey Grace unto thee, and cure thee preſently. *Lord* (ſaid the poor man in the Goſpel) *I brought my Son to thy*

D *Diſciples, but they could not help me*: inferiour means could not prevail: *Bring him to me*, ſaith Chriſt; he caſt out the Devil with power and authority: *Never enter into this man more*: thou art effectually converted, and ſhalt never relapſe again. Thus *Chryſoſtom* upon thoſe words of St. *Paul*, *He that purges himſelf, ſhall be a veſſel of honour*, obſerves, That "All other Diſciplines and Inſtitutions of Morality, "work only an outward reformation in appearance; Religion alters "the heart, and ſoul, and very nature of man. As Art, ſaith he, can "only alter the outward Figure and faſhion of things, it cannot tranſ-"form the Subſtance of them; it may alter the Figure of Iron, it can-

E "not turn it into a richer Metal: *Gratia ferreum vas acceptum reddit "aureum*, ſaith he, it turns a Veſſel of Iron into pure Gold.

The Church, and ſaving Grace in it, in this reſpect, excels even Paradiſe it ſelf. *In illa Paradiſo*, ſaith the Father, *unaquæque arbos in ſuo permanſit ſtatu*; the ſoil, it did not alter the kind of what was planted in it: but in the Paradiſe of the Church, *ſi invenero labruſcam, vitem efficiam; ſi invenero Oleaſtrum, Olivam efficiam*: wilde

Gourds

Sermon I.

Gourds and Brambles, by Grace are turned into wholesome and fruitfull Trees. There Grapes shall grow from Thorns, and Figs from Thistles. In that Paradise *Adam* discern'd the nature of Beasts, that came in to him, and so he named them, he did not change them: In this Paradise of the Church, let a cruel Lyon come to Christ, he will call him, and make him a meek Lamb. *Noah*'s Ark, saith the Father, *animalia recepit, & animalia conservavit*, what Creatures it received, the same it kept them. *Introivit Accipiter, & exivit Accipiter*; a Vulture went in, and it came out a Vulture: *Ecclesia verò, animalia recipiens, eadem transformat*; *introivit Accipiter, exit Columba*; *introivit Lupus, exit Ovis*. Let an unclean Beast enter into the Church, it shall go out clean; let it enter a Wolf, it comes out a Lamb. The Gospel shall turn *Swords into Plough-shares, Spears into Pruning-hooks*, Esai. iv. that is, saith *Tertullian*, *Feros, & savos animos in probos, & bonæ frugis operarios*: It shall turn instruments of cruelty into dispositions of mercy. *Out of the Devourer comes meat and hony*, was *Sampson*'s Riddle; ἀπὸ ἐσθίοντος βρῶσις καὶ γλυκύ, ἀπὸ μισανθρώπου φιλανθρωπία, saith *Basil*; the Devourer gives honey, that is, inhumanity and cruelty, by Grace and Religion, shall be turned into Pity. And *Augustine* alludes to the same Riddle, *In ore Leonis favus extructus*; that is, saith he, *persecutores Ecclesiæ dulcedine Evangelicâ imbuuntur*: the devouring Lyon shall bring hony in his mouth; the Church's cruel persecutours shall by the Gospel be made affectionate foster-fathers. This is the proper and peculiar work of Religion, to correct and sweeten the most desperate natures.

Thus the Primitive Fathers undertook the performance of those desperate cures. 'Twas the voyce of Religion in their times, "Hast "thou an unchaste Wife? bring her to Religion, 'twill make her "temperate: Hast thou an undutiful Childe? bring him to Religion, "'till make him obedient: Hast thou an unfaithful Servant? it will "teach him fidelity. Let *Onesimus*, a pilferer and runnagate, listen to St. *Paul*, he returns him to his Master faithful and serviceable. Monsters of sin, by the power of this, have been converted into miracles of virtue. The *Persians*, saith *Chrysostome*, that professed *Incest*, now by Religion practice Virginity. *Britanni humanis vescebantur carnibus, nunc jejuniis reficiunt animas suas*; they, that savagely fed upon other mens flesh, now by fasting do mortifie their own.

This is the main testimony to warrant and authorize the truth of Religion. "In disputes with Heathen and Infidels, we call for no "miracles from heaven, saith the Father, *Quin homines proferimus* "*antea bestiis truciores, Angelorum nunc imitatores effectos*. We warrant our Faith, not by working of wonders; but by converting of sinners, *cœnum in unguentum mutando*, by changing filthiness into holiness, and *dæmones in Angelos*, by turning incarnate Devils into mortal Angels. This makes prophane men and Infidels, stand and admire the Ministers of the Gospel. They that can tame Lyons, and lead about Elephants, how are they wondred at? How much more wonderful

A derful is the Goſpel of Grace, that can tame and ſubdue the moſt barbarous Diſpoſitions? *Si quis ſeneſcenti juventutem reſtituat*, ſaith he, *quanti æſtimamus?* If one could make an old, decrepit man, young and freſh again, and ſtreighten a crooked, diſtorted body; how would men flock to him? Religion is more powerful; it turns not age into youth; but rottenneſs and corruption into holineſs and integrity. Nay, this convicts the Devil himſelf, enforces him to believe and confeſs our Miniſtery. The Converſion of a barbarous ſinner confounds him more, then the working of a wonder. When he ſees *tot in homine mortis opera diruta, tot titulos damnationis repentè eraſos*, ſaith *Tertullian*;
B it aſtoniſhes him to ſee a childe of perdition by grace tranſlated to an heir of ſalvation.

"Oh, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*, theſe are the chief wonders of Religion. *Narrabo mirabilia tua; quæ mirabilia? Quòd facias de ſuperbo humilem, de adultero caſtum, de iracundo manſuetum.* When thou ſeeſt a proud man made humble, an adulterer chaſt, an uſurer bountiful, a cruel man merciful; thou mayeſt well ſay, *Hæc eſt mutatio dextræ Excelſi*; This is the finger of God, the wonder of Religion.

And that's my firſt Obſervation; as it is a fruit of his Renovation, *reſpectu naturæ, & diſpoſitionis*; Religion alters and mollifies the
C moſt profane nature; an hard-hearted Tormenter is preſently become a merciful comforter.

II. It is *opus reformationis*; it ariſes from the ſeed and principle of Renovation, *reſpectu particularis peccati*, in reſpect of his particular actual fault, of which he was now in preſent commiſſion. He was even now exerciſing his barbarous cruelty towards the Apoſtles; and in this ſin the hand of God now finds him, and the guilt of this ſin, the mercy of God now pardons him; and therefore of all other ſins, he will beware of this ſin, preſently puts himſelf into the practice of the contrary virtue. Obſerve,

D *A true Convert, though he reſolves of a general reformation, yet, above all others, he will have a ſpecial eye at that ſin, which was the cauſe of his greateſt ruine, and which God made the occaſion of his riſing, and converſion. Thou art made whole, ſin no more*; *generaliter dictum, ſpecialiter ſapit*, as *Tertulltan* ſpeaks: it aims ſpecially at ſome former ſin, that brought him to miſery. As a man recoverd from a dangerous ſickneſs, he carefully uſes a general good diet; but eſpecially deſires preſervatives, and antidotes againſt the diſeaſe, he was lately cured of. I ſurfeited of this meat, this proved my bane, and he knows relapſes to be dangerous and deadly. A Captain is careful to ſtrengthen every corner
E of his Caſtle; but that place, where the enemy brake in before, ſhall have a double watch, that's fortified eſpecially.

See how St. *Paul* ſticks at that one ſin of his, *I was a perſecutour*, it was a ſin was long ſince pardoned him, he might look upon that ſin now without horror, as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks: I, but for deteſtation and prevention, he could never forget it. *Deleta revocat*, ſaith *Chryſoſtom* of him, he recalls this ſpecial ſin paſt and forgiven, to ſtrengthen

Sermon I.

himself against a second commission. *Non vult iterùm divinæ misericordiæ oneri esse*, as *Tertullian* speaks of a true penitent, he will not be burthensome again to the grace of God, again to deliver him from so great a danger. And therefore makes this special sin the cause and opportunity, to reform all other sin. As in catching and taming of wilde beasts ('tis *Chrysostom*'s similitude) if you can lay hold upon the darling young one, the old one will soon be taken and subdued; so if thou mortifie thy special darling sin, the dam and old one, nay the whole breed of sins will be destroyed presently.

A strong apprehension and detestation of this one sin, it will make thee confess all other sins with it; as a strong striking one string will make the other strings of an Instrument give their sound also. This is *Bernard*'s rule and caveat of Repentance. Though thou must forsake whatsoever sin, *Ea tamen specialiter horreas, quæ specialiter appetebas*, saith he, thy special sin, which was thy main ruin, take heed that works thee not a second mischief.

See the practice of this Caveat in those two famous Penitents, in the Old and New Testament, *David* and St. *Peter*.

1. *David* commits Adultery, compasses and contrives it with deliberate Murther. *Magnum peccatum, magna misericordia.* A great sin committed, much mercy that pardoned it. Observe how shie and watchful he is of yielding to any lust, that touches and borders upon the suspicion of Murther. He longs to taste of the waters of *Bethlehem*, and yet checks himself, and abstains, because it did but hazard the blood of his Captains: Oh! 'tis the price of blood, I will not tast of it. Before he yielded to an adulterous lusting, now he abstains from a natural longing; there is shed the blood of his servant, now his heart smites him for venturing and hazarding the blood of his subjects. Oh! he remembers his former sin, he durst not come near the least occasion of it.

2. St. *Peter*, in the New Testament, sins in a presumptuous comparing and preferring himself before his fellow-Apostles, *Though all should forsake thee, yet I will not*; he is stronger then all of them, and loves Christ better. You know the success, he fell fouly. Observe how watchful he is, lest he be surprized with the like temptation. *Simon, loveſt thou me, more then theſe?* Now he is put upon the comparison, yet he dares not make it: *Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* Comparisons were dangerous to him, he dares not adventure them.

This is the holy wisdom, that Repentance teacheth thee. *Naufragium ſit ſtabilior portus*, saith the Father, He makes that a sea-mark or haven, where he suffered shipwrack. His godly sorrow begets this special care and revenge in him; he mainly avoids that particular sin, wherein God's hand found him, puts himself speedily and earnestly to the practice of the contrary Duty. And that's the second Observation, as it is a work of Reformation, *reſpectu particularis peccati*; of that sin whereof he was now in actual commission.

III. 'Tis

A III. 'Tis *opus reformationis*; 'tis a fruit ariſing from the ſeed of Renovation, *reſpectu particularis vocationis*; in reſpect of his private calling and profeſſion. He is a Gaoler, and they, you know, are uſually mercileſs, hard-hearted men. Now he is converted, he reforms the abuſes of his calling, uſes his Priſoners mercifully, and with much pity. He contents not himſelf to hear *Paul* preach, to believe, to be baptized, and ſo reſts in the common duties of Chriſtianity; but ſhews the truth and power of his Converſion in his private perſonal calling and profeſſion. He is not only a good Chriſtian, but a good Gaoler, hath care of his priſoners; a good Father and Maſter, all his houſe
B muſt be taught and baptized. Obſerve,

The truth of Converſion will evidence it ſelf in the ordering and reforming of our perſonal calling. Religion, 'tis not a matter meerly of publick and common profeſſion, dwells not in Churches and Temples only, but it will enter into thine houſe, bids it ſelf home to thee; as Chriſt to *Zacheus*, *Come, I muſt lodg in thine houſe*, have acceſs and ſway in all thine employments.

The Law of God was not to be wrote on the doors of the Temple, but upon the poſts of thine own doors, and thou to meditate upon it; not only going to the Church, but in thine field, in thine houſe, with
C thy children, in all the turnings of thy life and calling. It anſwers, as *John Baptiſt* to Soldiers and Publicans, *Defraud no man, oppreſs no man.* Like St. *Paul*, concluding the higheſt points of Chriſtian Religion with preſcriptions of perſonal Duties to Maſters and Servants, Parents and Children. The underſtanding and obſerving of which, ſaith one, is the beſt Commentary upon the higher myſteries of all *Paul*'s Epiſtles.

How many be there, like the man in the Goſpel, that offer to follow Chriſt whereſoever he goes, in a continual frequenting of the publick worſhip? No, ſaith Chriſt, *Go home to thine houſe, and*
D *there ſhew what God hath done to thee.* Let thy ſhop, and thy trading and thy perſonal employments, witneſs and evidence the power of thy Religion. Frequenting of Sermons, and ſolemn ſervice; alas! 'tis a cheap and eaſie performance of Piety and Devotion. They that can relinquiſh unlawful gains, though it coſt them dear, that can cut off their right hand, though it bring in their living, they ſhew the power of Grace and Religion. Thoſe in the *Acts*, that burnt and abandoned their unlawful books, to the loſs of thouſands, ſee what an honourable teſtimony the Spirit gives them of a ſound Converſion, *So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed*; in them had
E the Goſpel it's perfect work.

Without this, all your outward privileges are but empty titles. What is the honour and renown of this famous City? *Hæc noſtræ civitatis laus* (ſaith he of his *Conſtantinople*) *non quòd Senatum habeat, aut Conſules, aut mercium copiam*: This is the glory of your City, not to be the ſeat of the Empire, and Mart of the world: *ſed quòd populum habeat audiendi ſtudioſum, templa Dei referta, Eccleſias creſcentes*;

Sermon I.

Your full Churches and Congregations are the beauty of your City. But yet rest not there: You must bring home some of this Religion to your private dwellings and professions, lest, in this sense also, you make the Travellers censure prove too true of you: The Churches and Publick places of *London*, are stately and magnificent, but their private dwellings and houses are nothing answerable. Their Temples and Oratories are full of devotion, but their shops and counting-houses are utterly void of it. A

Tyrus, that famous City, when she shall be converted, the Prophet foretells not of Churches and Temples, but that her Trading and Dealings shall be sanctified and holy, her occupying and merchandize *shall be holy to the LORD*, saith the Prophet *Esai*. B

I meddle not with the secrets of your Trading and Gaining, and yet you must not exclude Divinity and Religion from over-ruling your conscience in your personal callings, and Secular affairs. Our Saviour that would not be a Judge, or divider of Estates, yet interposes his Doctrin, *Beware of covetousness*. St. *Paul* tells us, 'tis a point of Divinity, nay a great Mystery in Religion, to know how to be wealthy. Μεμύημαι, *I have learned the mystery to abound*, Philip. iv. 12. You will grant, there be Mysteries of Doctrin and Faith; and you would be loth, not to have insight into the highest of them. *Paul* tells you here, there is a great mystery in honest thriving and gaining, which I fear many a Crafts-man amongst you is utterly ignorant of. Those whose very Trades are sins, that are *ex officio peccatores*, as the Father terms them, oppressing Usurers, Brokers, and the like rabblement of City-thieves, more execrable and odious in St. *Chrysostom's* judgment, then high-way Robbers, what evidence can they possibly have of a sound Conversion? They that will not reform one abuse in their Trading, how will they forsake all for Religion; *Parentes, conjuges, liberi propter Deum relinquendi*, saith *Tertullian*, *de artibus, & negotiationibus, & possessionibus, etiam Liberorum causâ dubitas?* Religion will make thee forsake Wife and Children; can it not win thee from a sinful Profession! C D

I, but it brings in my living: How shall I shift?

Oh, saith a Father, *Indigna vox Christiano*; 'tis an unworthy Question for a Christian to ask, *How shall I live? Fides non respicit vitam, multo minus victum*; his life is not dear to him, much less his living. Not one that Christ called to forsake Trades and Professions, did ever answer him, *Non habeo quo vivam*, I must not give over my thriving and gaining. They not only reformed, but relinquished their Trades when Christ required it. Religion, it naturally and readily expresses it self at least in the over-ruling and ordering of our Secular employments. That's the third Observation, as it is a work of Reformation, in respect of his private calling and profession. E

Hitherto we have considered this action of the Gaoler, *respectu principii, à quo oritur*, as it was an action of a man believing, repenting, and as a man reformed;

I. In

A I. In his nature and diſpoſition.
II. In his particular ſinful action.
III. And laſtly, in his calling and profeſſion. But,

Secondly, Take notice of it *reſpectu objecti circa quod verſatur*, as it reſpects and paſſes upon theſe men, to whom he performed it; *He waſhed their ſtripes.*

And ſo the divers conſiderations of the object will ſpecifie the nature of the act, and fruit of Converſion.

Firſt, Then generally and briefly conceive them as *Proximi*, as Men, Brethren, and Neighbours, in that common reference, ſo 'tis *Actus*
B *Charitatis*, an act of Charity. And then obſerve:

The truth of Converſion will expreſs it ſelf in the works of love to our Neighbours and Brethren. This is the main evidence of our New-birth. *Dilectio, ſummum fidei Sacramentum, Chriſtiani nominis Theſaurus*, ſaith *Tertullian*. 'Tis the ſeal and aſſurance of a right-bred Faith. And, *non dubitet ſe amari, qui amat*, ſaith *Bernard*. Is thine heart enlarged in love to thy Brethren? thou needeſt not queſtion God's love to thee. The waſhing and anointing Chriſt's feet, was an aſſurance to *Mary* of pardon and peace: *Her ſins are forgiven her, for ſhe loved much.* So this Gaoler, waſhing and cheriſhing the members of Chriſt,
C hath an undoubted teſtimony, that himſelf is accepted.

Oh! the apprehenſion of God's love to us naturally enforces our love to his children. *If God ſo loved us, we ought to love one another*, ſaith St. *John*. The Inference, one would think, ſhould rather have been, *We ought to love him again*. True, but he ſets over this love, that is due to himſelf, to the uſe of our Brethren,

I. *In Signum amoris*; 'Tis the beſt ſign and proof of our love, if we love our Brethren. Who doth not boaſt of his love to God? 'Tis every man's profeſſion, and we cannot convert them. Bring them to this tryal, *Doſt thou love him that is begotten of God*; whereſoever
D thou ſeeſt his Image and Similitude? *By this ye are known to be my Diſciples, if ye love one another.* "Obſerve, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, 'tis not "working of miracles, caſting out Devils; but love to our Brethren, "that's the infallible proof of being a true Diſciple. *See how they love one another*; it was the mark, by which Heathens pointed out the Chriſtians in *Tertullian*'s Age. 'Tis *Signum Amoris*.

II. *In fructum amoris*; God ſets over this love to our Brethren, that they might receive the fruit and improvement of it. The benefit of our love, it cannot reach to him; his ſelf-ſufficiency admits no addition from our poor charity; he makes our Brethren the receivers
E of it. As Preſents to a King are but acknowledgments of homage to him, the profit and benefit is ſhared by his followers. *David*, he could not do kindneſs to *Jonathan* himſelf; but yet he enquires, *Is there any of Jonathan's ſtock alive, that I may ſhew kindneſs to?* If *Naaman* can faſten no gift on *Eliſha*, yet the children of the Prophets, and his ſervant *Gehazi*, ſhall have what they will of him. 'Tis *fructus amoris*.

III. *In*

Sermon 1.

III. *In augmentum amoris*; This love to our Brethren, it multiplies, and ſtrengthens, and encreaſes our love to God. That's hearty love, that reſts not upon the party, whom we chiefly affect, but enlarges it ſelf to his children, and followers, and all that belongs to him. *Charitas neſcit angulum, non amat proprium, ſervire deſiderat neceſſitatibus omnium.* It takes advantages of all relations, paſt and to come; 'tis *quoddam æternitatis exemplar*, as he ſpeaks of Faith, *præteritos, præſentes, futuros vaſtiſſimo quodam ſinu comprehendit*: layes hold of all, embraces all, that belongs to his Saviour. And that's the firſt Conſideration of it, as they are *Proximi*, and ſo this *waſhing*, 'tis *Opus charitatis*, he loves them as Brethren. But, A

Secondly, Conceive them as they are *Afflicti*, as Chriſtians in miſery and affliction, whipt and impriſoned; and then 'tis *Actus miſericordiæ*, an action of mercy. Before we conſidered them as *members* of Chriſt, and ſo he loved them; now behold them as the *afflicted members* of Chriſt, and ſo now he pities them. Obſerve, B

The naturalleſt motion of an heart converted is to commiſerate the poor Saints of God, and to ſhew mercy towards them. In this Gaoler's Converſion, it was not only love and goodneſs, that God ſhewed to him; but mercy and pity: his wounds were now healed, his ſoul now waſhed, fed, and refreſhed, and therefore naturally expreſſes all pity and compaſſion. The works of mercy are the moſt kindly returns of mercy received. Ὁ ἔλεος ἔλεον, ſaith St. *Baſil*; Mercy naturally breeds and provokes mercy. Wert thou furniſhed with all other Graces, yet thou falleſt ſhort, if thou wanteſt this one. *As ye abound in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, ſo abound in this grace*, ſaith *Paul*, perſwading the *Corinths* to Alms and Mercy. C

Theſe fruits of Piety and relief to the poor Saints, Chriſt

I. Moſt ſtrictly exacts.

II. Moſt graciouſly accepts.

III. Moſt bountifully rewards. D

I. He ſtrictly exacts them. The main tryal and enquiry at that great day ſhall be for theſe deeds of Mercy. *Ye did not feed me, ye did not viſit me, ye did not cloath me.* They are not charged with injuſtice, but for want of Mercy. Οὐκ ἐκεῖ ὁ ἅρπαξ ἐγκαθεῖται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἀχρεῖος κατακείται, ſaith St. *Baſil*; not for oppreſſing, but not for relieving, they are judged and condemned. And *non quia caſti, aut juſti, ſed quia miſericordes*, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*; 'tis the virtue of Pity, that's mainly required. This alſo,

II. He moſt graciouſly accepts. Any kindneſs to any of our children we take it thankfully; but if any of them be weak, ſick, or diſeaſed, and thou tendereſt or cheriſheſt that childe, we take that more kindly. *We have great joy in thy love, becauſe the bowels of the Saints are refreſhed by thee*, Philem. 7. There are ſome certain ſtately good deeds, that it may be you fancy and forecaſt to your ſelves, ſome *Abſalom's* Pillar; and ye know we are out-braved with erections of Abbies, and enriching of Shrines. See you not E

A these sumptuous buildings? *Tertullian*'s answer must be our Apologie, and your direction, *Plùs nostra misericordia insumit vicatim, quàm vestra religio templatim.* We rather relieve the living Temples of God's Saints, then erect their Shrines. This, we are sure, Christ will lovingly accept. He accounts it, as if it were done to himself. Christ openly professes it, *Ye have fed me.* We are ashamed to acknowledge, This man relieved me, and cloathed me: Christ will acknowledge it before Men and Angels. How welcome shall that man be to heaven, that hath fed Christ in a poor Christian? If a King should say, This man relieved me, and fed me, how would the Courtiers entertain and
B respect him? When Christ shall own thee for his Benefactour, how will the Angels receive and welcome thee?

It was an encouragement to *Abraham*, to harbour strangers, saith St. *Chrysostom*, because sometimes, at unawares, he received Angels: As a Fisher-man more willingly casts in his Net for Fish, because sometimes he draws up Gold or Diamonds. Thou hast a stronger encouragement to relieve poor Saints; he that receives them, receives Christ. *Qui fratrem non respicis, Christum consideras; qui conservum non cogitas, Dominum cogita*, saith St. *Cyprian*. Be willing to shew mercy, if not to a Christian, yet to Christ himself; despise not
C the poverty and meanness of them, nay, the rather embrace them. Christ assures thee thou shalt entertain him *in pusillo*, rather then *in magno*; *Quantò minor frater, qui admittitur; tantò major Christus, qui per eum advenit.* The meaner the Christian is, the more fully comes Christ to thee.

Thou sayest, thou wouldest relieve St. *Paul*, entertain *Elias*, if they would come to thee. *Quid quæris* Eliam? Receive a poor Saint, the Lord of *Elias* himself shall come to thee. What glory will this be to you rich men, to sit like *Abraham* in Paradise, not with poor *Lazarus*, but with Christ in your bosome? Πόσην ἔδει σε χάριν ἔχειν, *&c.* saith
D *Basil*, what thanks shouldest thou give him, that will thus honour thee, to become himself the Beggar, and make thee the Benefactour? He can otherwise provide for his poor members. He can feed them himself, *The Beasts on the Mountains are all his*, but he loves thy company, bids himself home to thee.

Why did he send *Elias* to a poor Widow to nourish him? saith *Augustine*, he could have fed him by a Raven, by an Angel. True, saith he, *Sed Viduæ fecit, non* Eliæ, it was for her good, not for his own; and *non ut pasceretur, sed ut pasceret*, saith *Chrysostom*, to feed her, indeed, rather then to be fed of her, and to give her opportunity
E for the deeds of mercy. And then, as he graciously accepts, so above all other works,

III. He doth abundantly reward these deeds of mercy. *Quantiscunque sumptibus constat, lucrum est pietatis nomine sumptum facere*, saith *Tertullian*: 'Tis great gain, to be at cost in these works of Piety. And τὸ δάνειον, 'tis τὸ δάνειον, saith *Basil*, Liberality to the poor Saints, 'tis not liberality, but usury to God, and that of the highest

Sermon I.

higheſt encreaſe. *Fœneraris hominibus, centeſimum reddent; fœnerare pauperibus, centuplum recipies.* This uſury to God, gains an hundredfold; *num centeſimum, ab homine, mavis an centuplum à Deo?* Wilt thou not put out thy money for the greateſt profit? How ſhould this provoke your pity and compaſſion to the poor diſtreſſed members of Chriſt? Eſpecially, how ſhould thy bowels yearn to ſee, not ſome few members afflicted, but the main Body of the Church to welter in blood? Canſt thou not give thy money to relieve it, when wilt thou be willing to ſpend thy blood to defend it? If thou wilt not waſh theſe wounds of the Saints, how wilt thou endure them in thine own body? If thou haſt not the pity of the Gaoler, when wilt thou have the patience of *Paul?* At leaſt, if thou canſt not relieve them, yet mourn for them; if thou canſt not deliver them out of Priſon, yet viſit them in it. *If when one member ſuffers, all the members ſuffer with it*; much more when the body it ſelf ſuffers, ſhall there any one member not condole with it? The Churches abroad, what ſtorms of perſecutions have fallen upon them, and ſtill reſt upon them? *the rod of the wicked abides upon the lot of the righteous*, ſhall not we mourn for them? or are we not members, becauſe by diſtance of place we be divided from them? 'Tis true what *Baſil* ſaith, and it ſuits with us, Ὁ Κύριος τὰς μὲν νήσους τῆς ἠπείρου διὰ θαλάσσης διέκρινε, τὰς δὲ νησιώτας τοῖς ἠπειρώταις διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης συνέδησε. "Our Iſlands are divided from others by the Sea; "but we Iſlanders are united with others by the bond of Charity. And charity, when it meets with miſery, is not only charity, but pity and mercy, releiving, comforting, at leaſt condoling the miſeries of our Brethren. Oh! mercy and compaſſion to the afflicted Saints, 'tis a powerful evidence, that we our ſelves have received mercy. That's a ſecond Conſideration of them, as they are *Afflicti*, ſo 'tis *opus miſericordiæ.*

Thirdly, Conceive them, as they are *Injuriâ affecti*, as men that were wronged and oppreſſed by him, and ſo 'tis *opus ſatisfactionis*, an act of ſatisfaction. He had tormented them before, heaped wrongs, and indignities, and vexations upon them; No doubt, with ſorrow of heart, he confeſſes his injury, and ſtudies and endeavours all poſſible ſatisfaction. Obſerve,

The truth of Converſion, as it ſhews it ſelf in all duties of love and commiſeration; ſo to thoſe we have injured, it will expreſs it ſelf in a due ſatisfaction. The Scholemen and Caſuiſts are ſtrict and expreſs in the enforcement of this. All dammages to ſoul, body, goods, or good Name, the remiſſion of theſe faults, alwayes implyes the deſire and endeavour of a juſt reſtitution. Satisfaction for ſin, as it is properly ſinful, and tendered to God, and to purchaſe pardon, is impious and blaſphemous. Thus to right thy Brother, were to wrong thy Saviour. But as it is offenſive to man, *aut ratione damni, aut injuriæ*, either as dammage or injury, done to him, and not to redeem, but to break off thy ſin (and *that's the full virtue of reſtitution*, ſaith *Valentia*;) or, if you will further, though not to purchaſe, or to procure pardon,

and

A and ſo to ſubmit himſelf to the mercy of God, as a capable ſubject; conceive this affection within the compaſs of theſe limitations, and no queſtion, to ſatisfie thy Brother, whom thou haſt formerly wronged, is a neceſſary fruit of true Converſion. Without this, ſaith *St. Auguſtine*, *Medicina pœnitentiæ non prodeſt*, all acts of Repentance prove ineffectual: Nay, *Non agitur pœnitentia, ſed fingitur*, 'tis no true Repentance, but a meer counterfeit.

Zacheus his fact, 'tis memorable and exemplary. He thinks it not ſufficient to give over his oppreſſions and defraud no more; nor contents himſelf with bounty to the poor, to the half of his ſubſtance: B but confeſſes his oppreſſion, and vows a juſt and plentiful reſtitution. Oh! he that will give his own, will reſtore anothers; he that is merciful, cannot chooſe but be juſt. See how gladly and freely, he binds himſelf to it, no man accuſed him; he doeth not like a Thief, that being purſued, lets fall his booty, becauſe it hinders his eſcaping; or, as birds of prey, that are fain to let their prey fall again, when it troubles their flight; but readily and chearfully he confeſſes and reſtores.

And yet what's the uſual converſion of an oppreſſing Uſurer? If he call in his mony, and give over his exactions, *Salvation is preſently come to his houſe*, C he is inſtantly become a Son of *Abraham*. What is this, but *latronis beneficium*, the amends that Thieves make thee, to rob thee no more? Nay, the ſatisfaction of Devils, that would ſeem to relieve thoſe, whom they ceaſe to moleſt. To ſuch Devils *St. Baſil* compares them, ὥσπερ οἱ πρὸς ἔκλειψιν πίπτοντες δαίμονες, that after ſome certain periods of the Moon, forſake their Lunaticks, and ſo ſeem to refreſh them: "As if it were ſufficient, ſaith *Gregory*, not to run into farther "arrearages, without ever croſſing, or ſatisfying the books for thy "former debts: Or, as *Chryſoſtom* conceits it, "When thou haſt "ſtab'd a man, and given him his deaths-wound, it were amends D "enough, not to ſtab him again; but to pull out thy weapon, with-"out ever applying any plaiſter to cure him.

At moſt, if they part with any thing, they turn it into the title of Alms, and Deeds of Charity, which God requires as a fruit of Repentance upon ſtrict neceſſity. *Bring forth fruits meet for Repentance*, ſaith our Saviour; *non dignos innocentiâ*, ſaith *Gregory*; the fruits of after-innocency are not ſufficient, no further to wrong them; nor *dignos miſericordiâ*, non only the fruits of mercy, and free liberality; but *dignos pœnitentiâ*, not in a glorious magnificent manner of free-gift and bounty; but reſtore and bring back again, like an humble E penitent, if thou mean to ſatisfie. Thou meaneſt to bequeath it *in pios uſus*. Why? God abhors the ſacrifices of rapin and oppreſſion. In that Caſe he bids thee not to leave thine offering at the Altar, and *agree with thy brother*; but take back thine offering from his Altar, and reſtore it to thy brother. Such ſacrifices as theſe, finde leſs acceptance, then *Cain*'s oblation; it was rejected of God, ſaith the Father, *non quòd alienum, ſed quòd minùs præcipuum*; it was his own, but

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not the best and choicest, and therefore God refused it. Οὐκ ἔστιν ἁγνὸν ἐκ μιαροῦ λαβεῖν, saith the Father; God will have no intercourse, He will not become a receiver to Thieves and Robbers. Shall the High-Priests fling back the price of blood from their Church's treasury? and darest thou dedicate thine *Acheldama*, thy purchases of blood, to the use of his Saints, or honour of his Sanctuary? the offerings that God accepts, must be without the least relish of leaven; that sowres, and embitters, and makes all thy service loathsom and unsavoury. Now "the gain of oppression, saith *Chrysostome*, 'tis like "leaven, that infects and taints all the possessions, though lawfully "gotten. *Universas facultates tuas fermentabit.* A little of this makes God abhor thy whole oblation. Purge it out by a just restitution, that so thou mayest express this character of Conversion, that the Gaoler practises. He wronged them before, he labours to satisfie; as they are *Injuriæ effectus*, 'tis *opus satisfactionis*.

Fourthly, Conceive them as they are *Ministri*, as the Ministers and means of his calling; and so 'tis *Opus gratitudinis*, a testimony of Thankfulness. *These are the servants of the most high God*; these have brought the glad tidings of Grace and Salvation; not only their feet, but their wounds, and stripes, and sores are beautiful; he thankfully embraces, refreshes, and comforts them. And then, I beseech you, give way to this Observation;

That the truth of Conversion will manifest it self in all fruits of thankfulness to the Ministers of salvation. See now this Gaoler draws out the Apostles, as *Ebed-Melech* did *Jeremy* from the depth of the Dungeon; makes his Prison, like *Obadia's* Cave, to nourish these Prophets; becomes a *Lot*, and an *Abraham*, to entertain these Angels and messengers of heaven.

Oh! art thou a new Convert? I question not thy bounty, much less thy just and lawfull dealing with thy lawful Minister; with the *Shunammite*, thou wilt study and contrive all possible expressions of thy love and gratitude. See *Lydia* here, how she enforces the Apostles to accept of her Charity. The *Macedonians* beseech St. *Paul* with much entreaty to admit their bounty. The *Galathians* can pull out their eyes to gratifie the Apostle. *Philemon* owes no less, then himself; what he is, and what he hath, is not too dear for *Paul*.

The Primitive Christians, how did their poverty, in this kinde, abound to their rich liberality? Whole states and inheritances were chearfully offered for a supply of the Apostles, and the Churches necessities, and that with much humility and reverence; they presented it at the feet of the Apostles: A strange kind of trembling a voluntary benevolence. Oh! saith *David*, *I will not serve my God with that, which cost me nothing*. He judged it an indignity to the service of God, not to be at some cost and charges for the publick worship. St. *Paul* that could easily dispence with his personal provision, yet how strictly exacts he a necessary maintenance for the Churches Ministery? 1 *Cor.* ix. he grounds it upon a fourfold Law.

I. The

Sermon I.

A I. The Law of Nature teaches it, *Who plants a Vine-yard, and eats not the fruit* of it? *who feeds a Flock, and eats not of the milk* of it?

II. The Law of Nations requires it, *Who goes a warfare at his own charges?*

III. The Law of *Moſes* commanded it, *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn.* And, upon all theſe,

IV. The Evangelical Law, that neceſſarily infers it, *Even ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they that preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel. He hath ordained it, and they ſhould live of it.* They are binding words, and imply neceſſity: and yet how many conceit it as a Popiſh
B kinde of *res conſilii*, in a voluntary benevolence; which the Lord requires *ſub neceſſitate præcepti*, upon neceſſary obedience?

The ſowing of ſpiritual things deſerves at your hands the reaping of carnal; and we may exact it, though not *ut pretium rei*, yet as *præmium perſonæ*; and *non ut donum, ſed ut fructum*, ſaith St. *Paul*, we require not gifts, but rejoyce to ſee the fruits of our labours. It comforted *Paul* to ſee the flouriſhing of the *Philippians* love, though he could have wanted it. *Joſes* that gave ſo liberally to the Apoſtles, *Acts* iv. 36. was ſurnamed by them *Barnabas*, a *Son of conſolation*.

'Tis a ſign they have received ſmall ſtore of ſeed, that are thus
C dead and barren in return of fruit. 'Tis a plain argument of a baſe eſteem of God, of Grace, of the Kingdom of Heaven, that a Servant or Factour ſhould have twenty times the allowance of the Agent of your ſouls.

That Strumpet of *Rome*, what coſt doth her Lovers beſtow upon her? how have thoſe Caterpillars conſumed the fat of thoſe Lands, where they have been cheriſhed? How many great Eſtates hath that Idol devoured? And is it not a ſhame, that their *Dagon* ſhould be enriched, and our Ark impoveriſhed? Nay, let me tell you, thoſe Popiſh *Philiſtines* returned back our Ark of God not altogether
D empty. It had gifts and golden Emerods, but our men of *Bethſhemeſh*, though they receive it gladly, yet in the taking it down, they ſhuffled out thoſe Emerods, and purged us clean of thoſe ſuperſtitious endowments. But ſuperſtitious they were, and aboliſhed they are: only Tithes, I ſuppoſe, have an higher Tenue, more Moral and Divine. Are you exact in theſe without fraud or ſacrilege? Do you let your houſes for ſo much rent? Me thinks it ſounds like St. *Peter*'s Queſtion, *Tell me, Sold you your Land for ſo much money?* I wonder *Sapphira* could not order it otherwiſe, and tell St. *Peter*, that indeed a reſervation there was of an after-payment in another nature; but
E the price they bargained for, was juſt ſo much. No queſtion, had it been no tie to the Spirit of God, ſhe had eſcaped that fearful judgment.

At leaſt, if hardneſs of heart will not yield to this, yet that, which all men conclude of, a certain, a ſufficient, nay, an honourable allowance, muſt be made to your Miniſters. What a ſhame is it for you, that the Guids of your ſouls ſhould be diſtracted into anxious ſolicitude

Sermon I.

for their own bodies? *Lapides Sanctuarii, in capite omnium platearum.* What pity is it to see the stones of the Sanctuary lie scattered in the street? "That is, saith *Gregory*, to have the Ministers of the Church "scattered and dispersed into Secular necessities? Oh! these Fowls of the heavens, should be provided for without their sowing and reaping. These Lilies of Paradise should not toyl nor labour, and yet grow and flourish. As *Augustine*, alluding to God's Curse upon *Cain* for killing his Brother, *Let the earth be barren unto thee, when thou tillest it*; *Quid congruentius*, saith he, *quàm ut illum, cujus scelere frater occisus est, in terra laborantem sterilitas sequeretur, illis, quorum munere fratres salvantur, de crastino minimè cogitantibus, fructuosa terra serviret? Cain* that killed his Brother, even when he labours, is cursed with barrenness. Ministers that save their Brethren, even though they labour not, must be rewarded with fruitfulness. It was small credit for the *Ephesians*, to have St. *Paul* protest, that *his own hands had supplyed his necessities*. And is it not the indelible stain of many Patrons and Parishes, that their poor Ministers should be driven into Secular employments, and forced to hold some Trade in *Commendam* with their spiritual Functions? They have *Propheſied in their streets*, I, and there may live too; they can scarce add, *Tho hast eat and drunk in our presence, and been comforted* by us.

But better things are known of you, ye Worthy Citizens; your Charity is gone abroad, your Piety hath testimony from the Church of God. Only take heed, that you marr not your gift in the manner of giving; that you turn not your Tithes and necessary Duties into the opinion of free-will-offerings. Would you your selves take it well, that your Debtour, when he payes your own, should boast himself for your free Benefactour? And is it equal, that that the with-holding of which the Spirit of God doth expressly call *Robbery*, the payment of it should be no Duty, but only an act of meer Liberality?

Suppose the manner were left a large by the Law of God, as we are often answered; yet questionless, those generalities of sufficiency, and certainty, and bounty, being limited to this rate by the interposition of lawful Authority, puts a bond of conscience upon you, and absolute necessity. *These things ought you to do*, saith Christ to the Jews, and they did accordingly. Are you worse then *Jews?* or your *Pastours* viler then *Scribes* and *Pharisees?* What ever others do, yet you that have felt the saving power of this blessed Ordinance, you that have been watered with those showers of Grace, you cannot be barren or unfruitful, you will chearfully express the truth of your conversion by all possible thankfulness to the means of your salvation. That's a fourth Consideration, as they are Ministers, so 'tis *Opus gratitudinis*.

A SERMON ON PROV. XX. 9.

Who can ſay, I have made mine heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?

THE trial, and examination of our hearts and wayes, to ſee in what ſtate and condition our ſouls are, in reference to God, what progreſs we have made in that great work of Mortification; the enquiry into this, is a Duty, though hard and difficult; yet exceeding uſeful and beneficial to us. The Scripture often calls upon us to make this enquiry. *Commune with your own hearts*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* iv. 4. *Examine your ſelves, prove your ſelves*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. *Let us ſearch, and try our wayes*, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*, Lament. iii. 40. And accordingly the Saints and ſervants of God have ſet themſelves to this holy practice. *I have conſidered my wayes*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. cxix. 59. *I commune with mine own heart, and my ſpirit makes diligent ſearch*, Pſal. lxxvii. 6.

And 'tis worth the enquiry what return and account the Saints have made upon this ſearch and ſcrutiny, what verdict and ſentence they have paſſed upon themſelves. And *Solomon* gives it up here, both for himſelf, and all other men. And 'tis a ſad, and ſorrowful account; 'tis like the cry of the Leper, *Levit.* xiii. 45. *I am unclean, I am unclean.* 'Tis the confeſſion of the *Publican*, *Lord, Be merciful to me a ſinner.* 'Tis *Job*'s lamentation, *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?* Briefly, here is the account, that, upon an impartial ſearch, the ſpirit of a Chriſtian muſt give up for it ſelf; and that is a ſad diſcovery of much ſin and corruption.

The

Sermon I.

The holieſt man living, if he look ſtrictly into his conſcience, ſhall finde many ſtains and blemiſhes in his ſoul, many defilements of ſin, many imperfections of grace, many failings and ſlips in his beſt performances, which will draw from him this mournful Exclamation, *Who can ſay, I have made mine heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?* A

The Text then, 'tis a ſerious conviction of our ſinful condition; it aſſures us of the imperfection of our Mortification; it tells us there is not any, the moſt regenerate man, that is fully freed from the contagion and pollution of ſin. We may ſay of this portion of Scripture, what St. *Paul* ſaith of the Scripture in general, *Gal.* iii. 22. this *Scripture concludes all under ſin; that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*, Rom. iii 19. B

For the better underſtanding of this Truth, we will take the words into a twofold conſideration.

Firſt, We will conſider the Matter propoſed, and that will ſhew us the Nature of the Duty of Mortification.

Secondly, We will conſider the Manner of propounding of it; 'tis by way of Queſtion, and Interrogation; *Who can ſay?* And that ſhews us the difficulty of the Duty of Mortification, how hardly 'tis performed.

Firſt, The Duty, and then, C

Secondly, The Difficulty.

Firſt, Let us conſider the Duty to be done, that's *the cleanſing of our hearts, to be pure from ſin.* 'Tis a good deſcription of that great and neceſſary work of Mortification. And in it we may take notice of three things:

Firſt, Here is the Act it ſelf to be performed; that's called here *mundatio*, a making clean, or cleanſing.

Secondly, Here is the Object or Matter that muſt be wrought upon, and cleanſed, *the heart.*

Thirdly, Here is the Meaſure and Degree of it, at which we muſt aim, that's expreſſed in the laſt clauſe of the Text, *I am pure from my ſin.* D

Firſt, The firſt thing conſiderable is the Action it ſelf, *I have cleanſed*; and it affords us a threefold Meditation.

I. The firſt is from the Nature of the Action, 'tis called *a cleanſing*, or *making clean.*

II. A ſecond is from the Property of the Agent, that's *I.*

III. The third is from the Circumſtance of the Time, in the performance of it, *I have cleanſed.*

I. For the Nature of the Action, 'tis called *a cleanſing.* 'Tis E a word implying ſome change and alteration, that is to be made in us. The Text doth not ſay, *I am clean*, but *I have cleanſed. I am cleanſed*, that betokens a ſtate, and fixed condition; but, *I have cleanſed*, that implies a change and alteration. 'Tis one thing to *be pure*, another thing to *be purged.* A thing may be originally, and conſtantly pure, and ſo continue, it was never otherwiſe; but, that which

is

A is purged, was formerly impure, ſome droſs was mixed with it, 'twas tainted with pollution. St. *John* points out that difference, 1 *Joh.* iii. 3. *He that hath this hope in him, purgeth himſelf, as God is pure.* God he is pure, the Saints are purged and purified. God is originally, and unchangeably pure; but the Saints are not ſo; they are purged, and altered, and changed, and ſo brought to purity.

It ſhews us two things:

1. The nature of Sin, 'tis a matter of uncleanneſs.

2. The nature of Grace, it hath the vertue of cleanſing us.

1. Conſider here the nature of Sin; it brings upon our ſouls a B ſpiritual uncleanneſs. 'Tis the uſual expreſſion, by which the Scripture ſets out the evil of ſin, 'tis called *an uncleanneſs*, Rom. vi. 19. *You have yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs, to commit iniquity.* Again, the Scripture calls it *a defilement*, Tit. i. 15. *The mind and conſcience of unbelievers are defiled.* 'Tis called *a pollution*, Ezek. xvi. 6. *I ſaw thee polluted in thine own blood.* 2 Pet. ii. 20. theſe Sins are called, *The pollutions of the world.* 'Tis called *a filthineſs*, Pſal. xiv. 3. *They are altogether become filthy.* 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit.*

To make us conceive this uncleanneſs of Sin, the Scripture ſets it C out by many Similitudes:

(1) The uncleanneſs of Sin, is repreſented by thoſe many legal uncleanneſſes, which are ſpecified, and forbidden in *Moſes* his Law. All thoſe Typical pollutions ſerved to this purpoſe, to ſhadow out the ſpiritual defilements, which Sin brings upon us.

(2) Again, the uncleanneſs of Sin, 'tis repreſented to us by the uncleanneſt Beaſts; as the Dog, the Swine, the Serpent: all theſe are made Emblems and Repreſentations of Sin. *De grege factus eſt egregia creatura*, ſaith Saint *Bernard*. Man, the choiceſt of all the creatures, by Sin becomes like the unclean Beaſts.

D (3) 'Tis repreſented to us by the uncleanneſt diſeaſes; the Botches and ſores of *Egypt*, the loathſomneſs of Leproſie; thoſe filthy and abhorred diſeaſes, that the Scriptures mention, all of them ſerve to make us conceive the pollutions of Sin.

It ſhould faſten our moſt ſerious thoughts upon this Conſideration, that *Sin brings upon us a great uncleanneſs*; it will afford us theſe three uſeful and pious Meditations.

1 Is Sin an uncleanneſs? Uncleanneſs is a debaſing quality, it vilifies whatſoever it cleaves unto. Unclean things are vile things. Purity carries with it an excellency; every thing, the more pure E it is, the more precious it is. The pureſt Gold is the richeſt; the more droſs is in it, the more vile and baſe it is. *Impuritas eſt ex mixtura vilioris*, Scalig. Mingle with any thing that which is baſer, and ye make it viler. *Sordeſcit aliquid, cùm inferiori miſcetur naturâ; etiam de puro Argento ſordidatur Aurum, ſi miſceatur*, Auguſtin. 'Tis ſo with Sin, it debaſes that ſoul that commits it, and makes it vile.

What *Jacob* ſaid to his Son *Reuben*, may be truly ſaid to every Sinner,

Sermon I.

Sinner, *Thou wert the excellency of dignity, but now thou haſt defiled thy ſelf, thy excellency is gone, thou art become vile and contemptible. Man was in honour*, but by ſinning, *he is become as the beaſts that periſh*, Pſal. xlix. 12. 'Tis piety and goodneſs, that raiſeth the price and worth of any man. *The righteous*, ſaith *Solomon*, *is more excellent than his neighbour*, Prov. xii. 26. But Sin debaſes him, and makes him worthleſs. Hence it is, that Sins are called by the Apoſtle, *Paſſions of Ignominy, diſhonourable luſts*. 'Tis the main brand of reproach that is laid upon Satan, he is called *an unclean Spirit*; not ſo much a rebellious, or malicious, or impious, (though he be all theſe,) but this is his name of Infamy, that the Scripture ſets upon him, *He is an unclean Spirit*.

2. Is Sin an Uncleanneſs? Uncleanneſs, 'tis a loathſom quality. Filthineſs ſtirs up abomination, and a loathing in us. Other conſiderations of ſin ſtir up other affections. The diſobedience of ſin breeds anger: the Enmity of ſin begets hatred in God: the Miſchief of ſin begets revenge; but the Impurity of ſin, the Uncleanneſs of it, that begets abomination.

This pollution of ſin makes the ſoul of a Sinner look loathſom in the eyes of God. *Job* xv. 16. *How abominable and filthy is man, which drinks iniquity as water? A wicked man is loathſom*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xiii. 5. And God threatneth his people, if they ſin againſt him, *Levit.* xxvi. 30. *My ſoul ſhall abhorr you*. And the Prophet *Zachary* expreſſes a mutual antipathy 'twixt God and a Sinner, Chap. xi. 8. *My ſoul loathed them, and their ſoul alſo abhorred me*. *Solomon* paſſes this doom upon a wicked man, *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*. 'Tis a full expreſſion; it implies not a diſlike only, or ſome diſtaſte, or offence; but it imports a deep deteſtation, an utter abhorring: the heart riſes, the blood boils at that which it loaths and abominates.

3. Is Sin an Uncleanneſs? Uncleanneſs is a thing odious in it ſelf, and for it ſelf, though there be no other conſequences, that do attend it. If it be unclean, it is odious, though it be not pernicious. Filthineſs is in it ſelf the matter of deteſtation. Loathſom diſeaſes are more odious to us, than painful diſeaſes, though they be more dangerous. Who had not rather be tormented with the Stone, than be defiled with Leproſie? Such a diſeaſe is ſin. Were there no other malignant, or miſchievous attendants upon it, did it not provoke God's anger, incenſe vengeance, lay us open here to miſery, ſink us into Hell, plunge us into perdition; were theſe ſtings taken out of it, yet who would put ſuch an unclean and filthy Serpent into his boſom? Here is enough to ſet us off from any wicked way, that it defiles and pollutes us, that it makes us loathſom to God, and his Angels: and we ſhall one day loath our ſelves for it. *Ezek.* xx. 24. *Ye ſhall remember your wayes, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight*. Thus *Job* abhors himſelf. Thus *David* cries out of his ſins: *My wounds ſtink, and*

A *and are corrupt*, Psal. xxxviii. 5. Nay, *Ipsæ vulnerum cicatrices fœtent*; Nazianz. A penitent sinner loaths the very scarrs of his sins, after they are healed.

It should make us to look upon Sin in these true appearances of it; esteem it according to the odious aggravations that God hath put upon it. And that would beget in us *sanctum fastidium*, an holy loathing of it. We have gentle constructions, more plausible and moderate names, more seemly colours, which we put upon it, and that makes it go down so easily with us. 'Tis a good Rule of *Parisiensis*, *Sancti cogitant turpia, ut magis abominentur*. A good
B Christian will consider Sin in the most loathsom Notions of sin, so to beget in himself an abomination of it.

That's the first thing considerable; the Nature of Sin, 'tis an Uncleanness.

2. This action of cleansing, it shews us *naturam gratiæ*, the sovereign vertue of Grace and Repentance; 'tis of a purging vertue, it hath a power of cleansing us from the pollutions of Sin. All those purifications, and ceremonial cleansings in the Law of *Moses*, were so many Types, and Representations of it. 'Tis compared,

(1.) To clean Water, which washes away filth, and bodily pollu-
C tion, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness.* And what he means by that, he tells you, *Verse* 27. *I will put my Spirit within you.* Those streams of living Water, they shall wash away all our defilements. This God promises to his Church, *Zech.* xiii. 1. *In that day, there shall be a Fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness.* So *Esay* calls the people to repentance under this Similitude, *Esai.* i. 16. *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before me.*

(2.) This work of Grace is compared to a Wind. So it came upon the Apostles. And Christ compares the Spirit of Regeneration
D to the *blowing of the wind*, John iii. 8. And the Wind hath a power of cleansing. *Job* xxxvii. 12. *The wind passeth, and cleanseth.* *Jeremy* tells of a Winde, to fan, and to cleanse. Such are the breathings of the Holy Spirit.

(3.) 'Tis compared to a Fire, and that's of a purifying nature; that eats out, and consumes all dross, and corruption. And such is the Grace of Christ: *He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire*; *Matth.* iii. 11. *Esai* puts both Water, and Fire together, to express the efficacy of the grace of God. *He shall wash away the filth of Zion, and purge it with the spirit of burning*, Esai. iv. 4. The Prophet *Ma-*
E *lachi* tells us, Christ's Spirit shall be *like a Refiners fire*, and *like Fullers sope*, or the Herb *Borith*, that's effectual for cleansing.

This grace of Christ is able to fetch out the greatest stains, and pollutions of sin. *David*'s sin of Adultery and Murther, brought upon his soul a foul Uncleaness; yet he hopes that Grace was able to cleanse him; *Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow*, Psal. li. 7. The sins of *Jerusalem* were of a foul pollution, Oppression, and Blood-shed,

Sermon I.

heinous pollutions, yet what ſaith the Prophet? *Waſh you, make you clean; though your ſins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow; though they be red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wooll.* So the *Corinthians* ſins were hainous pollutions, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9. *Extortioners, Drunkards, Adulterers, Sodomites, but ye are waſhed,* ſaith St. *Paul, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* A

That's the ſecond thing, the vertue and efficacy of grace; 'tis able to cleanſe us. We have done with the Action. Come we,

II. To the Agent, *I have cleanſed.* It may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, that the Text here makes us Agents in this great work. The Scripture elſe-where ſeems to deny the ability of it to any man. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one,* ſaith *Job* xiv. 4. *Can the Black-moor change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may you alſo do good, that are accuſtomed to do evil,* Jer. xiii. 23. What ſaid the King of *Iſrael*? *Am I a God to cleanſe a man from his Leproſie?* We muſt know the Scripture ſpeaks of a double cleanſing: B

1. Sin is cleanſed in our Juſtification, when 'tis pardoned and forgiven us. This cleanſing belongs only to God; 'tis he alone, that can thus cleanſe us, 'tis he alone can blot out our iniquities, pardon our offences. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity, and paſſes by the tranſgreſſions of his people?* Micah vii. 18. The *Phariſees* were in the right in this point, when they ſaid, *Who can forgive ſins, but God only?* C

Indeed there are ſome diſpoſitions, and gracious preparations required on our part, as Sorrow and Humiliation; and ſome conditions, as Faith, and ſeeking unto Chriſt; but the very act of Forgiveneſs, 'tis only God's. But,

2. Sin hath another cleanſing, and that's by mortification, and regeneration, and converſion. The progreſs of theſe acts God works in us, and by us: His Spirit enables us to carry forward this work, which he graciouſly begins, and to cleanſe our ſelves. He gives us the firſt ſtock of grace, and enables us to improve it. As a Surgeon firſt dreſſes a wound, and gives the wounded man ſalve to dreſs it himſelf. To this the Scripture exhorts us; *Waſh you, make you clean;* Eſai. i. 16. *O Jeruſalem, waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be clean,* Jer. iv. 14. *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all defilements of fleſh and ſpirit,* 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Cleanſe your hands, ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts, ye double-minded,* Jam. iv. 8. This work, as 'tis principally God's, ſo 'tis ours alſo under God, and in the ſtrength of his grace we may, and muſt perform it. 'Twas *Naaman*'s errour, he would be cleanſed from his Leproſie, and ſit ſtill, *Eliſha* muſt do all; no, what ſaith the Prophet? *Go unto Jordan, waſh thy ſelf ſeven times in it, and thou ſhalt be clean. Up, and be doing, and the Lord ſhall be with thee.* D E

And then,

III. There is a third thing conſiderable, that's the circumſtance of Time, *I have cleanſed.* The Negative part belongs to the Queſtion; but

A but here I look upon it as a work of continuance. No queſtion, the Saints have entred upon this work; but yet 'tis not ſo finiſhed, but ſtill they muſt go on in this work of cleanſing. Mortification, 'tis not *in inſtanti*, a work ſoon and eaſily diſpatcht, and rid out of hand; but of long continuance: it requires progreſs and perſeverance. The wound of ſin may be given in an inſtant; but the cure of ſin is a matter of more length of time. Poyſon may ſuddenly be taken down; but 'tis not expelled, and wrought out again, but by tract of time. 'Tis a ſign they never truely begun it, that do ſay or think, they have already finiſh'd it. Sin never dies ſuddenly, though we may do ſo. The
B death of ſin, 'tis a lingring death. *Sentiant ſe mori*, was the Emperour's ſpeech. A Chriſtian muſt feel the growth and progreſs of Mortification. 'Tis well if we can ſay of this work of Mortification, as Chriſt ſaid of his work of Redemption, when we are a dying, *Conſummatum eſt*; *'Tis now at laſt finiſh'd*: till then we cannot. A good Chriſtian dies daily to ſin; but the laſt gaſp of ſin is with the laſt breath of life. 'Tis final grace that finiſhes this work.

We have done with the action of Mortification: Come we now,

Secondly, To the Object, or Matter, that's Our Heart; *I have cleanſed mine heart*. Indeed this work of cleanſing muſt be entire, and
C univerſal, it muſt be as large as the whole man. *Fleſh and Spirit*; 2 Cor. vii. 1. *The whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body*, 1 Theſſ. v. 23. *Hands and heart*, James iv. 8. *Feet, and hands, and head*; as *Peter* ſpeaks. The Plaiſter muſt be as broad as the Sore. Sin is an overſpreading contagion; there is no ſound part in us, *we muſt mortifie all our members, that are upon the earth*; *the whole body of ſin muſt be aboliſhed*, Rom. vi. 6.

But yet this cleanſing is, in a ſpecial manner, appropriated to the heart. Why ſo?

I. *Cor*, 'tis *conceptaculum peccati*; the Heart is the fountain and
D original, from whence all other uncleanneſſes do ſtream and flow. *From the heart*, ſaith Chriſt, *come murders, adulteries, all theſe ſins defile a man*, Matth. xv. 18. This made *Solomon* call for our greateſt care over our Heart: *Keep thine heart with all diligence, from thence come the iſſues of life*; I, and of Death too. Life is in the outward man, like light in the air; but 'tis in the heart, like light in the Sun. From thence flows the ſource of all uncleanneſs. As *Moſes* put his hand into his boſom, and it came out Leprous; ſo our outward man draws all its pollution from the heart within. An evil heart makes an adulterous eye, a deceitful tongue, a violent hand; all outward ſins
E are the off-ſpring of the heart.

II. *Cor*, 'tis *receptaculum peccati*; the heart is the lurking, and ſtarting-hole, to which ſin betakes it ſelf. Outward reſtraint may hinder the actual commiſſion of ſin; but yet our corruptions will recoil to our hearts. *His heart gathers iniquity to it ſelf*, Pſal. xli. 6. as a corrupt, putrified part will gather corruption to it ſelf; there is the ſink, and ſediment of all corruptions. As in Winter we ſee the Trees

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ſeem to be dead; not a leaf left on the boughs or branches; but then the ſap runs to the root, that keeps life in it. A man may be free from outward enormities, and yet his heart be guilty of inward pollutions. Thus *Job* reproves his accuſers, *You ſhall ſay, Why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me?* This makes the work of Mortification ſo hard and difficult; becauſe 'tis ſo hard to work upon the heart. As we know, 'tis an eaſier matter to heal an outward wound, than to ſtanch an inward bleeding, or to cure an Ulcer in our inward parts. *Cor primum vivens, & ultimum morient*; as in nature, ſo in ſin. A

III. *Cor*, 'tis *ſuſtentaculum peccati*, the heart is the proper ſeat, and reſidence of Sin; there is a full ſufficiency in the heart to commit any ſin; there is the Adultery of the heart in luſt, the Murder of the heart in hatred, the Theft of the heart in covetouſneſs. Outward awe may deterr us from theſe bodily commiſſions, and yet our hearts may be guilty of theſe very ſins. *In ipſa intùs voluntate peccat, qui non voluntate, ſed timore non peccat*; ſaith *Auguſtine. Fecit, quia voluit.* He ſins, that would ſin, though he doth not act it. Remove Objects, break off Inſtruments, avoid occaſions, yet our hearts can conceive, and act ſin in it ſelf. *Voluntas ipſa ſibi imputatur, nec excuſari poteſt per illam perficiendi infelicitatem, operata quod ſuum fuerat*; Tertullian. The heart is a Sinner, though the outward man concurr not. B C

There remains one Particular more; and that is,

Thirdly, The meaſure and degree of Mortification; *I am pure from my ſin.* This is the high aim that a Chriſtian muſt ſet to himſelf, to preſs forward to perfection. *Purgatio*, 'tis *motus ad puritatem*; Purging is never ſufficiently done, till it attain to pureneſs. What one can do, we ſhall hear hereafter; but this is that which we muſt deſire to do, not only to break the ſtrength of Sin, that it do not over-maſter us; but to fetch out the very life of Sin, that it may not moleſt us; not only ſubdue the *Canaanite*, but deſtroy him; not only lop off the boughs of Sin, but pluck up the roots of Sin; *non ut nè regnet tantùm, ſed ut nè ſit*; not only that it bears no ſway with us, but that it have no place in us. This is the aim and meaſure of a Chriſtian. *Menſura hominis*, 'tis *menſura Angeli*, we ſhould aim at Angelical perfection, to *do God's will in earth, as 'tis done in heaven.* Our primitive purity, that we had in Paradiſe, to recover that; our final purity, that we ſhall have in Heaven, to attain to that, that muſt be the aim, and purſuit of a Chriſtian. D

And the expreſsion of the Text, 'tis very ſignificant; *Pure from my ſin*: it layes our Sin at our own doors, and ſo it concerns us to rid our ſelves of it. Sin, 'tis my ſin. E

I. 'Tis my ſin, *Habet originem à me*; Sin, 'tis ours, as being the iſſue of our nature, the Off-ſpring of our will. Many Diſputes have been of the firſt cauſe, and original of ſin, the Text tells us whence it is, to whom we muſt impute it, even to our ſelves. Neither Satan's ſuggeſtions, nor any other temptations can excuſe us from it. *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and is enticed*; James

A James i. 14. *Partus ſequitur ventrem:* the Devil may be the Father; but our own hearts, that receive his temptations, are the Mother. The Mother's ſide is the ſureſt, and ſo we muſt own it.

II. 'Tis my ſin, and only mine. Our good works are ours; but yet God's too: nay, they are more God's works, than ours; 'tis he that *works all our good works in us.* But as for our ſins, they are only ours. We may ſay of them, as that devout Penitent ſaid of his Illegitimate Childe, *In eo nihil habui, præter peccatum.* The ſinfulneſs of all our actions, 'tis only ours. If God ſhall ſay to us, *Tolle quod tuum eſt, & abi; Take that which is thine own*: 'twill prove only ſin and im-
B piety.

III. 'Tis my ſin, even after 'tis paſt, and after 'tis committed; yet while the ſtain of it is not fetcht out by repentance, our conſciences muſt own it. Alas! we think ſin vaniſhes with the acting; we count it but a tranſient thing; when 'tis paſt, and over, we hope never to hear more of it. No, 'tis ours ſtill, till it be pardoned and purged. *God requires that which is paſt*, ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. iii. 15. *Tranſit actu, manet reatu. My ſin*, ſaith *David, is ever before me*; it haunted his conſcience. Indeed, when God diſcharges us of it, then we may ſay, *Peccatum non meum, What have I to do with thee?* but till then, the
C guilt of it will dog thee, the uncleanneſs of it will ſtill cleave to thee.

IV. 'Tis my ſin, that I muſt purge, that ſin which above others I account mine, and do moſt delight in; that above all muſt be cleanſed and mortified. The *Phariſee* boaſted he was free from other mens ſins; *he was not like the Publican.* We bleſs our ſelves, if the ſins of other men break not out upon us; *I am not ſo*, or *ſuch a Sinner*; but, *Are there not ſins with you, even with you alſo?* ſaith the Prophet ſpeaks to the people of *Iſrael:* No, labour to purge, and mortifie thy proper and ſpecial Sin.

1. The ſin of thine inbred and natural inclination. For though
D our Original ſin diſpoſes us to all ſins; yet our perſonal inclinations carry us more ſtrongly to ſome kinde of ſin.

2. My ſin, the ſin of mine Age: that to which thine years and age do diſpoſe thee; as childe-hood is idle, youth wanton, old age covetous. Theſe muſt be ſtriven againſt.

3. My Sin, the ſins of my Calling and Vocation. Every Calling hath its temptations, unto which they are ſubject. Theſe muſt be cleanſed. We muſt be able to ſay with *David, I have kept my ſelf from mine iniquities*, Pſal. xviii. 23.

We have ſeen the Duty propoſed, *The cleanſing of our hearts from*
E *our ſin.* Now follows,

Secondly, The *manner of propounding of it*, which is by way of Queſtion and Interrogation, *Who can ſay?* and that ſhews the Difficulty of the Duty; and, in reſpect of the full perfection of it, the Impoſſibility. And here we have,

Firſt, The Perſon queſtioned, *Who?*

Secondly, Then the Enquiry it ſelf; *Who can ſay, I have cleanſed?*

Firſt,

Sermon I.

First, Here is the Person questioned; *Who?* Indeed this Question, A
'tis not meant, nor made for all sorts of Sinners. There are such, whose lives testifie against them, such as are unquestionably notorious Sinners.

I. *Solomon* propounds not this Question to the prophane man; such as sin with greediness, that make a Trade and Profession of Sin. There is no question to be made of them; *Such are judged of all, and condemned of all:* such God complains of, *Ferem.* ii. 34. *I have not found out thy sin by secret search, it appears openly.*

II. Nor doth he propound this Question to the grosly-ignorant man; that knows not his own heart: but is utterly unacquainted with B
the state and condition of his soul, what it is, or what shall become of it His soul serves him for Salt only, to keep him from puttrifying. *Solomon* tells us of such as know no difference 'twixt the soul of a man, and the soul of a beast, *Eccles.* iii. 19.

III. Nor is this Question intended for the negligent and careless man, that never mindes the welfare of his soul, takes no heed to his wayes, never communes with his own heart, nor makes enquiry into the condition of it; such as *Jeremy* speaks of, *Chap.* viii. 6. that *never say to themselves, What have I done?* These, and such as these, live, and lie in Sin, never have escaped the pollutions of the world in the C
least degree. Their condition is, questionless, miserable.

No; the Question reaches to the best sort of men, those that have made a good progress in this work of cleansing, and mortification; yet which of them can say, *I am pure from my sin?*

1. *Who*, though never so innocent, and unblameable in humane conversation? Though no man can accuse them, yet God and their own Consciences may justly condemn them. There is in the holiest man that, that doth defile him, some remainders of corruption still stick to him. What saith holy *Job*, Chap. ix. 30. *If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in* D
the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhorr me.

2. *Who*, though never so penitent? yet who hath found, and felt, and bewayled sufficiently all his corruptions? *Though they wash themselves with Nitre, or Fuller's Sope*, yet their spots and blemishes will not utterly be removed. *Quis in hac vita sic mundus, ut non sit magis, magisque mundandus?* Aug. *Purge out the old leaven, as ye are unleavened.* A Christian is much unleavened, and yet still hath leaven to purge out, 1 *Cor.* v. 7.

3. *Who*, though never so vigilant and watchful over his wayes? though he *keep his heart with all diligence*, as *Solomon* advises him; yet E
some sins of surreption will steal in upon him. They, that are *clean, yet had need to wash their feet*, saith our Saviour; nay their hands and their hearts too; daily defilements will grow upon them.

4. *Who? Quis à peccato absolutus?* who, though already justified, though he hath obtained the pardon of his sins, and his peace, and acquittance from God, yet can say, he is fully cleansed from his pollutions, which

A which his ſins have brought upon him? Beſides the guilt of ſin, there is *macula peccati*, the ſtain that ſin brings upon the ſoul. Though his tranſgreſſion be pardoned, yet that ſticks faſt on; the corruption is not ſo ſoon wrought out, and compleat purity fully attained. *Numquid, quia deleta eſt iniquitas, ſanata eſt infirmitas?* ſaith St. *Auguſtine*: Though the iniquity of ſin be pardoned; yet the infirmity of ſin, that's not preſently cured. *He forgives thine iniquity*, ſaith *David*, *and heals thy diſeaſes*. The Sun enlightens in an inſtant; but it heals and warms by leiſure and degrees. Pardoning mercy is of quicker diſpatch than healing mercy. *David* was preſently pardoned, as ſoon as he confeſſed
B his ſin; *The* LORD *hath taken away thy ſin*, ſaid *Nathan*, *thou ſhalt not die*; but yet it coſt him many prayers and tears, to be cleanſed, and healed. How doth he complain of broken bones? how doth he pray, *Waſh me, cleanſe me; eſtabliſh me with thy free ſpirit?* He gives not over thoſe ſupplications. He was ſoon freed *à morte peccati*, from the death of ſin: but not ſo ſoon *à morbo peccati*; long did he groan under the languiſhings of that ſin, ere he could recover them. The man that was deadly wounded, was ſaved in the way from the danger of death, but yet he was left in the Inn or Lazar-houſe, to be cured of his wounds, *Luke* x. *Infunditur vinum & oleum in via; ſed ſanatur*
C *in ſtabulo*; ſaith *Aug.* The Wine and Oyl of Mercy ſaved him from death; but yet he muſt continue in the Chirurgeon's hand to get health and ſtrength.

That's the Perſon queſtioned. Let us now conſider,

Secondly, The Queſtion it ſelf, *Who can ſay, I have made mine heart clean?* And this form of Queſtion, *Who can ſay?* prevents and convinces many ſlie evaſions, and falſe anſwers that men are ready to return to this Queſtion.

I. The queſtion ſtands thus, *Who can ſay?* it runs not thus, *Who doth ſay?* There are thoſe, that ſay it, and would have others think it,
D that they are pure, and clean, and free from ſin. *Solomon* points them out, and they are not a few; he tells us there's a whole generation of them, *Prov.* XXX. 12. *There is a generation, that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not waſhed from their filthineſs.* And he tells us, you may know them by their looks, *O how lofty are their eyes, and their eye-lids are lifted up*, admiring themſelves, deſpiſing all others. Juſt of the *Phariſees* diſpoſition, *Luke* xviii. he had no ſin to be pardoned, no corruption to be bewailed, no luſt to be mortified, no grace to be ſupplied; but all his devotion is, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men,*
E *nor like this Publican.* The Prophet *Eſai* ſets them down in their colours, *Chap.* lxv. 5. they ſay to all others, *Stand by thy ſelf, come not near me, I am holier than theſe.* Chriſt muſt not eat with *Publicans and Sinners.* Nay, he is no Prophet with them, if he ſuffer a poor ſinner to touch him, *Luke* vii. And who, I pray you, is this, that findes this fault? A *Phariſee*, you may be ſure. But, what was his name? He was *Simon*, a Leper, for all his holineſs.

II. The Queſtion is thus framed, *Who can ſay?* not thus, *Who*

will

Sermon I.

will ſay, he is pure from his ſin? The Saints will not ſay ſo, ſaith the *Pelagian*, though they be free from ſin; but out of their humility they forbear to ſay ſo; 'Tis *propter periculum inanis gloriæ*, (as *Bellarmine* ſpeaks in the like caſe.) Leſt they ſhould ſeem to be vain-glorious, they will be content to be accounted ſinners. What is this, but to complement, not to complain to God, that we are ſinners? Thus, tell the *Pelagians* that Infants are ſinners; no, that they deny, but yet they will allow them to be baptized for the forgiveneſs of ſins. That's but *Stylus Curiæ*, you may for form-ſake uſe theſe words, though they be not ſinners. What ſaith St. *Auguſtine* to theſe ſleights and evaſions? *Non tantùm humiliter, ſed & veraciter ſe dicunt Peccatores*; 'tis not only an humble, but a true confeſſion, that we are all ſinners. *If we ſay, We have no ſin, there is no truth in us*, ſaith St. *John*. 'Tis not only want of humility, but of truth, and conſcience, and ſincerity, to ſay, We are no ſinners. A B

3. The Queſtion is, *Who can ſay?* 'tis not thus expreſſed, *Who dare ſay, he is pure from ſin?* as being ſo aſſured. The *Papiſts* teach, no man muſt ſay ſo, *ob incertitudinem gratiæ, non ob certitudinem peccati*. They tell us, the meaning of the word is, that we cannot be aſſured we are in the ſtate of grace, that our ſins are pardoned, that our ſouls are ſanctified, that our corruptions are mortified, though they be ſo. Hope well we may upon probable conjectures, but certain we cannot be of our ſpiritual condition. An Aſſertion ſo deſtructive to all true comfort, that *Luther* ſaid well, *That for this Opinion alone the Church of Rome was to be abhorred*. No; the Text imports not a good Chriſtian's uncertainty of grace: but his certainty of ſin. It bids us not doubt of our ſpiritual converſion; but to be truly ſenſible of our ſinful corruption; not to ſuſpect *primitias gratiæ*, to call in queſtion the firſt-fruits of grace, but to acknowledge, and bewail *reliquias peccati*, the remainders of ſin. C

A Chriſtian may certainly finde the work of God's Grace in himſelf; and take comfort in it, and yet withall may feel in himſelf the motions of ſin, and confeſs, and bewail it. The ſoul of a Chriſtian is like the womb of *Rebekah*, where fleſh and ſpirit, the Grace of Regeneration, and the dregs of Corruption, like *Jacob* and *Eſau*, are ſtriving, and wreſtling. *Paul* felt the Law of the Spirit, and the Law of the Fleſh ſtill ſtirring in him. He was ſure of both of them; *I know, that in my fleſh dwells no good thing*; and again he ſaith, *We have received the Spirit of God, that we may know thoſe things that are given us of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 12. Saint *John* knew both; *If we ſay, We have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves*, 1 John i. 8. there is the confeſſion of ſinful corruption; and yet again he ſaith, *Hereby we know, we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*; there is the feeling, and aſſurance of ſpiritual Regeneration. *Spiritus Sanctus non eſt Scepticus; nec dubia, aut opiniones in cordibus noſtris ſcribit, ſed affectiones ipſâ vitâ, & omni experientiâ certiores, & firmiores.* Luther. D E

IV. The

A IV. The Queſtion is, *Who can ſay?* It gives contradiction to *Pelagius* his Aſſertion, that *Any man might ſay ſo.* He confeſſes ſometimes, that no man is free from Sin; but withall he affirms, every man may, if he will, live without ſin. Indeed, this proud Opinion of *Pelagius*, that ſame ἀναμαρτησία, which he ſo boaſts of, That man by his Free-will might abſtain from all ſin, 'twas the root and Original of all his Hereſie. But what ſaith St. *Auguſtine? If by Nature we may be free from Sin, then Chriſt died in vain.*

Saint *Paul* tells us of τὸ ἀδύνατον, of the impoſſibility of fulfilling the Law, *by reaſon of our fleſh.* Not that the Law is in it ſelf impoſſible, B but in *hoc ſtatu*, or rather *caſu*, as by our firſt fall we are now weakened, ſo 'tis impoſsible. Had we continued in our integrity, the Law had been eaſie, but the Caſe is far otherwiſe by our ſinful infirmity. We do not ſay, the Law is impoſsible, as we ſay 'tis impoſſible for a ſound man to flie; but as we ſay 'tis impoſsible for a lame man to run. So that this difficulty we finde, argues not the impoſſibility of the Duty; but the impotency of the party, for the performance of it.

But yet, to mend the matter, the *Papiſts* tell us, that though by the ſtrength of nature we cannot, yet by the ordinary aſſiſtance and ſupC plies of Grace, we may avoid all ſin, fulfill all righteouſneſs, and perform the Law to the utmoſt. But when this Doctrine of theirs is brought to the Trial, they are found guilty of what the next *Verſe* condemns, *They have falſe weights, and falſe meaſures to judge by.*

1. They make thoſe no ſins againſt the Law, which are ſins, and forbidden by the Law: as idle Speeches, petty Pilferings, ſudden and paſſionate Swearings, and Blaſphemies. Theſe, they ſay, are no mortal ſins, nor do they hinder Perfection.

2. They make thoſe no Duties, which are Duties, but call them Counſels only, which do not oblige us: *To love our enemies*, 'tis no D Duty with them, but a Supererogation; a man, they ſay, is not bound to it. No; let us ſeriouſly conſider what *David* ſaith, *Thy Law is exceeding broad.* There are two dimenſions in it:

(1.) The firſt is the *maximum quod ſic*; that is the extenſion and largeneſs of what is commanded; that's *toto corde*: we muſt obey with all our heart, with all our ſtrength; that takes in all ſorts of good works, and makes them neceſſary. And then there is,

(2.) A ſecond dimenſion, that's *minimum quod non*; the ſtrictneſs of every thing, that is forbidden; that's *Non concupiſces, Thou ſhalt not luſt.* That forbids all evil motions, and makes them mortal ſins: the E higheſt perfections are neceſſary duties; the ſmalleſt infirmities are ſinfull tranſgreſſions. Bring thine actions to this ſtandard and trial, and thou wilt be found *minus habens*, far ſhort of perfection.

V. The Queſtion is, *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean?* 'Tis not ſaid, *Who can ſay, I have kept my heart clean?* And ſo the Queſtion reflects upon our original corruption. We brought with us unclean hearts into the world, ſtained and defiled with our original

Sermon. I.

pollution. And 'tis that, which makes the work of Mortification ſo hard, and difficult. We have a ſink of ſin inbred in us, which can hardly be cleanſed; as 'tis hard drawing and drying up a Pond that's fed with a Spring. We all ſet out to Sea in a Leaking Veſſel, that ſtill lets in Water; we muſt alwayes be Pumping. This St. *Paul* calls εὐπερίσατον ἁμαρτίαν, the ſin that ſtill beſets us, and hangs faſt upon us. And this makes the cure to be ſo tedious; as thoſe diſeaſes which are natural and hereditary, like the Leproſie of *Gehazi*'s Children, they are much harder to be cured, than other caſual and incident maladies: as Cloth that's died in the Wooll, will hardly be changed from the firſt tincture. This ſin makes us ſinners even before we can act or commit ſin. As thoſe venemous creatures, that have poyſon bred in them, are hateful in their ſpawn, though they have not been hurtful in any actual miſchief. *Quæ creſcentia ſunt perniciosa, eadem ſunt vitiosa naſcentia*, ſaith the Oratour; that which is hurtful being grown, is hateful in the brood. Theſe natural propenſities to ſin, which are inbred in us, they do defile, and pollute us.

So then we ſee the ſtrength of this Queſtion. We may ſafely reſolve it into a peremptory aſſertion, and conclude, *No man is clear, and free from ſin.* A right believer muſt acknowledge it, a good Chriſtian, to his grief and ſorrow, findes and feels it. It may well paſs here for a Proverb, 'tis fitted for every mans conſcience, as *Luther* ſaid of Proverbs, *Experientia, Proverbiorum mater*; every man's experience will prove the truth of it.

A ſad Queſtion it is, and ſhould be pronounced with a mournful accent; but yet, though it be a Queſtion tending to humiliation, yet 'tis not a Queſtion to breed deſpair. A good Chriſtian, in all this perplexity, may return ſuch anſwers, as may eaſe his conſcience.

1. No man can ſay, *That he is pure from his ſin*, but yet this a good Chriſtian can ſay, *I have obtained of God the pardon of my ſin, my peace is made up in heaven with him.* Though I am imperfectly cleanſed, yet here is my comfort, I am fully pardoned. This was St. *Paul*'s comfort, when he bemoaned himſelf for thoſe infirmities, that did perplex him: *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? 'Tis God, that juſtifies.* He doth not ſay, *'Tis God that ſanctifies*, becauſe that work is imperfect; our Sanctification cannot bear us out againſt God's Juſtice; but here is his comfort, 'tis God that juſtifies, that pardons, and acquits us. *Chriſt came not only by water, but by blood*; though the water of Sanctification do not perfectly cleanſe us, yet the blood of Redemption, that ſhall acquit us. 'Twas the devout Father's joy and comfort, *Gloriabor, non quia juſtus ſum, ſed quia redemptus ſum*; in this I rejoyce, not that I am innocent, but that I am redeemed, and my ſins pardoned.

2. No man can ſay, that *He is pure from his ſin*; but yet this a good Chriſtian can ſay,

1. I lament, and bewail my ſin, that ſticks ſo cloſe to me; I allow not my ſelf the commiſſion of any one ſin, I abhorr mine uncleanneſs in duſt and aſhes.

2. I

2. I ſtrive, and endeavour, and fight againſt all my corruptions, I account it not a liberty, but a captivity to be ſubject to ſin.

3. I have got ſome victory, and through the grace of Chriſt I have broken the ſtrength and dominion of Sin; Sin doth not rule and reign in my mortal body, I do not yield my members as weapons to Sin. If Sin be diſarmed, the *Militia* is taken from him, ſure then his Kingdom is broken, and in part ſubdued.

4. I long for that time, when Sin ſhall be aboliſht; *He that is dead, is freed from ſin*, ſaith St. *Paul*. That makes a good Chriſtian think of death with comfort; then ſhall I be rid of all my corruptions. Final grace purges out all Sin. Sin, it leaves us as the unclean Spirit left the young man in the Goſpel, it rent him, and tare him, and laid him for dead, and ſo went out of him. The Earthen Veſſel muſt be broken in pieces, that's the cleanſing of it, *Levit.* vi.

He that can part with that which is dear to him, and willingly embrace that which is moſt unpleaſing to him, that ſo he may be rid of Sin; may well comfort himſelf againſt all his corruptions. Now Life, that's the ſweeteſt thing to man; Death the moſt bitter: but a good Chriſtian will be content to part with Life, becauſe it is the time of Sin: and to welcom Death, becauſe that puts an end to all our Sins. If the hatred of Sin overcome in us the love of life, and horrour of death, canſt thou ſay truely, "*I will part with life, I will welcom death, that* "*I may ceaſe from ſinning, and offending my God?* This Reſolution may be a great comfort in all our perplexities. It gives an acceptable ſatisfaction to *Solomon*'s ſad Queſtion, *Who can ſay, I have made mine heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?*

FIVE SERMONS ON PROV. XXX. 7, 8, 9.

Two things have I required of thee, deny me them *not before I die.*

Remove far from me vanity and lyes; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

Leſt I be full, and deny thee, *and ſay, Who is the* LORD? *or leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the Name of my God in vain.*

THis Paſſage of Scripture, 'tis a Sacred and Holy Meditation of *Agur*, an Holy Prophet, living in the Church of God, about *Solomon*'s Time: And it being (as all other ſacred Prophecies, and parts of Scripture) not of private uſe, or Interpretation, but inſpired by the Author of all heavenly Truth, and propounded as an Oracle to the Church of God; and being ſuitable for Matter and Form of expreſſion, to the Book of the *Proverbs*, pithy and ſententious, *Solomon* recollects it. And as he gathered all the Hallowed and Dedicated things of the Worthies before him, and brought them into the Temple; ſo he doth *comportare*, make a collection of theſe ſacred Sentences, and inſerts them into the Canon, and Body of Scripture, and puts them upon Record for the benefit of the Church. How many Volumes of Humane Literature are periſhed and loſt? *Solomon*'s Tractates of Natural Philoſophy are gone and forgotten: his Books of Phyſick, and Cures of Diſeaſes, ſome ſay, *Hezekiah* burnt, and aboliſhed them; becauſe the people aſcribed too much to them, to the neglect of God. But the leaſt parcel of Scripture hath a Patent of Eternity. The Law was writen in Stone, and kept in an Ark of Wood that would not putrifie, to ſhew and ſhadow forth the laſting perpetuity of it.

The Penman and Inſtrument of this ſacred Propheſie, is ſaid to be *Agur*,

Sermon I.

Agur the Son of *Jakeh*, nowhere mentioned in Scripture, but in this place. However, we are certain of the Authour, the Spirit of Truth, and then our Faith need not be anxious, who was the Instrument. We question not, nor doubt of the Letter and Hand-writing of our Friend; because, may be, he is a stranger that brings it to us. And Scripture, (saith *Hilary*) is *Epistola Creatoris ad creaturam*, a Letter sent to the Church from the God of Heaven. What though the Messenger flee away like the Prophet from *Jehu*? or the Spirit take him from us, as it did *Philip* from the *Eunuch*? yet, if we finde God's Hand-writing, and Seal, the character of his Spirit in it, though the Messenger be unknown to us, we must embrace and adore it. Many parts of Scripture have not the Names of the Prophets that penned them, nor need they: the Secretarie's Name adds not Credit and Authority to the King's Letters and Mandates. All Writs issue out in the King's Name; *Teste meipso*, witness our selves in heaven, ratifies all Scripture.

And that 'tis Holy and Sacred, doth appear by the Materials and Ingredients, of which it consists; all of them the Language of Scripture, the breathings of God's Spirit. The Hand may be the hand of *Esau*; but the voice is the voice of *Jacob*, God speaks in it.

First, Here is an holy and humble Confession of sin, and natural corruption. Vers. 2. *Surely, I am more brutish then any man, and have not the understanding of a man in me.*

Secondly, Here is an holy and religious Profession of his Faith in God, and belief in his Word, Vers. 4. *Who hath ascended up to heaven, or descended? Every Word of God is pure, add not unto his Word.*

Thirdly, Here is an holy and devout Prayer and Petition in the words of my Text.

Fourthly, Here are holy and heavenly Rules and Directions for the ordering of our life and conversation in the rest of the Chapter.

The Text is a Summary, short compendious Prayer and Supplication, that this Holy Man makes in his own behalf. And, though it runs in Personal terms, yet it is of common and universal use: *Specialiter dictum, generaliter sapit.* We have the same necessities of nature, and the same spirit of Faith and Prayer that he had. There is great use of the more private and personal Prayers of God's Saints in Scripture. *Jacob*'s Vow, when he took his journey, *If the Lord will be with me*; his thankful profession, when he returned, *I am less then the least of all thy mercies*; *Hannah*'s supplication in her distress; *David*'s humility, when *Shimei* reviled him, and *Michal* mocked him, *I will yet be more vile*; *Solomon*'s wish and choice, Wisdom rather then Riches; *Job*'s patient Profession, *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return*; Old *Simeon*'s dying Devotion: all these were in Personal terms, but penned and propounded, as models and Patterns of Prayer and Devotion. There should be an Holy μελεμποίησις, and succession of the same spirit of Grace in the successions of the Church and Saints of God. We should strive, that the Talent,

A Talent, which by death is taken from such a Saint, may be given to us. How happy were it, if, as it was said of *Elisha, The spirit of Elijah rests upon Elisha*: so it may be said of Christians in after-times, the spirit of *Jacob* in his Vow rests upon such a man; the spirit of *Job* in his patience and meekness rests upon such a man; the spirit of *Simeon* in his willingness to die; the spirit of *Agur* in his moderation and contentaon rests upon such a Christian. 'Tis our Duty then to incorporate and work this Prayer into our hearts, to appropriate it to our Personal condition, and to make it our own.

This Prayer of this holy man stands upon three Particulars.

B First, Is a Summary Proposition of this his Prayer, Ver. 7. *Two things have I required of thee, deny me them not before I die.*

Secondly, Is a particular expression of this his Petition, Ver. 8. *Remove far from me vanity and lies, give me neither poverty nor riches.*

Thirdly, Is an effectual enforcement of his Prayer by the Motives and Grounds, that stirred him up to make it, Vers. 9. *Lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the* LORD? *or, lest I be poor and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain.*

First, Is the Summary Proposal of his Prayer and Request by way of Preface, and to make entrance into it. In it observe three Particu-

C lars:

First, Is the Form of his Prayer, *I have required them of thee, deny me them not.*

Secondly, Is the Matter and Sum of his Prayer, what he prayes for, *Two things.*

Thirdly, Is the Date and Season that he sets unto his Request, for the obtaining of his suit, *Before I die.*

First, The Form of his Prayer is set forth in a double expression:

I. One in these words, *I have required of thee.*

II. Another in these, *Deny me them not.* And with this latter he

D seems to back, and strengthen, and set an edge upon the former.

I. *I have required of thee*, that is the first expression. Besides the general nature of Prayer, it makes us suiters and Petitioners. *Agur*, and *Solomon*, and all, must stretch out empty hands for supply from above. And the right aim and direction of this Prayer, 'tis to God the Sovereign, to whom this Homage and Tribute is due, the sole possessour of heaven and earth. He runs not to any Creature. The Church of the *Jews* never knew any Invocation, but to God only, placed no Altar by God's Altar. Being to beg his bread and sustenance, he doth not, as Christ speaks in the Gospel, run to his neighbours house, calls

E not upon any Saint, Lend me three loaves; no, they are abed and asleep, they can neither help nor hear us. 'Tis *he that gives food to all flesh*, Psal. cxxxvi. 25. The brute beasts may teach us this prayer, to know the Master of the Crib, who it is that feeds us. *The young Lions seek their meat from God*, Psal. civ. 21. *The young Ravens cry to him*, Psal. cxlvii. 9. *The eyes of all wait upon him, for their meat in due season*, Psal. cxlv. 15.

To

Sermon I.

To pass by these, incident in every Prayer: The Form and Manner of expression, *I have required*, gives us an hint of a threefold Observation: A

1. It is *Oratio personalis*, a personal Petition.
2. 'Tis *Oratio deliberata*, a deliberate and advised Petition.
3. 'Tis *Oratio repetita*, 'twas his usual Prayer, his frequent Petition.

1. 'Tis *Oratio personalis*, runs in personal terms; *I*, *Me*. Although it be intended for publick use and benefit; yet is it set out in these terms of singularity. Observe it briefly, *The Saints of God have not content themselves with common and publick Prayers, but they have abounded in private and personal supplication.* Indeed, the publick worship is of primary dignity, in the midst of the great Congregation, in the communion of Saints, in the publick Assemblies. *David* abounded in private prayers. Oh! but yet he longed to worship with God's people in the Temple. And Christ frames a comprehensive Prayer; Our, Us: either with all, or at least for all. But yet the exigences of the Saints are such, as not only publick, but private, and personal Prayers are useful and necessary. B

1. 'Tis a great trial of the Truth, and sincerity of our Devotion. Formality, or Law, or Hypocrisie, may bring thee to Church, as well as Devotion. Players upon the Stage will act passionately. But, if thou canst withdraw thy self from the eye, and observation of all men, and betake thy self with *Isaac* into the Fields, with *Peter* to thy Chamber, and there commune with thy God, and worship him in secret, offer him a free-will-offering in private, that gives good evidence of thy sincerity. C

2. The many varieties of wants, unto which Christians are subject, enforces them to personal Devotions, besides common supplications. 'Tis not possible in any publick Form to comprehend all personal necessities. Thou hast sin, that doth most of all annoy thee, that thou wouldst fain over-master; thou sufferest a temptation, which doth more then ordinarily vex and distract thee; thou standest in need of Grace in a fuller measure; many temporal occasions of sorrow, fears, cares, these thou wouldest unbosom thy self of to thy God; the Prayers of the whole Church cannot descend to these particularities. *Every man that knows the plague of his own heart*, saith *Solomon*, must accordingly make prayer and supplication. That man's Religion is scandalous, that so attends private prayers, as to neglect the Church; that man's devotion is suspicious, that is all for the publick, and knows no use or necessity of private Petition. That's the first, 'tis *Personalis oratio*. D E

2. 'Tis *Oratio deliberata*. *I have required*; it implies deliberation, and fore-thought, and resolution in his Petition. This Prayer of *Agur* was no sudden passionate Wish (many men have present flashes of devotion, some pangs and fits of piety; Oh! but they are ungrounded, unadvised, and so vanishing presently) but a serious deliberate Prayer. And serious deliberation is necessary here,

1. In

A 1. In the general nature of a Prayer.
2. Out of the particular condition of this Prayer.

1. In general. 'Tis not Prayer, if it be not adviſed and deliberate. True Prayer is *Sermo natus in pectore*, bred in the breaſt, not in the tongue's end only. *David* ſhews the nature of Prayer: *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed*, Pſal. lvii. 7. Before he enters upon that duty, he reſolves himſelf of it, *Pſal.* xcii. 1. *'Tis a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD*: he forecaſts it in his mind, and reſolves upon it. What are moſt mens prayers? Only flaſhes of devotion, ſudden wiſhes; as *Lord have mercy upon us*; *God be thanked for all*
B *his Bleſſings*; *God ſend us the light of heaven*; *The Lord ſend rain, if it be his will*; *'Tis a ſickly time, the Lord bleſs us*, &c. Theſe are *Optiones*, not *Orationes*, that never mount upward: like the fluttering of a Bird, whoſe wings are clipt, it never takes it flights, and ſoars up to heaven.

Wicked men have had exceeding good wiſhes, as *Balaam*; and Holy men have been overtaken with exceeding bad ones, as *Jonah*, *Job*, and others. No, Prayer is another matter, it recalls and recollects the ſoul, frames, and bends the heart, aims, and fixes the eye upon God, as *David*, Pſal. xxvii. 4. *One thing have I deſired of the*
C *Lord, that I will ſeek after.*

2. This particular Petition requires deliberation and reſolution. He will not have it conceived as a raſh, unadviſed motion. To renounce the World and the riches of it, to be content with a mean Eſtate, no more then for neceſſities, few men will think ſuch a Prayer, to be in good earneſt. To neglect wealth and abundance, nay to pray againſt it, to deſire God not to heap too much upon him, to abate of his portion; with *Daniel* to refuſe the King's delicacies, and to chooſe to live on Pulſe; with *Paul, to take pleaſure in neceſſities*; who will think this man ſpeaks adviſedly? Yes, yes, *Agur* will have us know,
D he hath made it his ſuit, and he will ſtand to it. 'Tis no raſh pang of ſeeming mortification; but after deep thoughts and conſideration, he hath ſat down, and caſt the charges. This is true mortification indeed. As *Paul* contents not himſelf once to renounce all things for Chriſt, *Phil.* iii. 7. *I count all things loſs for Chriſt*, but he redoubles and ſeals up his word, *yea, doubtleſs, I count all things but loſs, nay dung.* Sudden wiſhes, and indeliberate profers, and attempts to renounce the world, they are like *Orpah*, ſhe makes a fair profer to go with *Naomi*, but bethinks her ſelf, and goes back again: but deliberate prayers and reſolutions, are like *Ruth*, ſhe cannot be put back
E again, ſhe will live and dye in that reſolution. See how Chriſt rejects this extemporary mortification, when men will in a good mood abandon the world, *Matth.* viii. 19. One, all in haſte, will forſake all, *Follow Chriſt, whereſoever he goes.* Jeſus puts him back, *The Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have neſts, the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head*; and ſo departs. That's the ſecond: *Agur*'s prayer, 'tis *Oratio deliberata.*

Sermon. I.

3. 'Tis *Oratio repetita*; 'Tis his prayer which he hath made and will make; his dayly, cuſtomary, frequent ſuit and petition. 'Tis a third Character of his religious devotion. He abounds in this duty, ſets himſelf the dayly task of commencing this prayer, and of ſoliciting God to the granting of his deſire. This frequency of prayer it is requiſite; A

(1.) In general: in all the prayers we put up to God. There is no mercy almoſt ſo eaſily atchieved, but it will coſt many ſuits for the obtaining of it.

1. Prayer, as it is a ſervice done to God, requires frequency. 'Tis not like an Homage done once to the King, at his firſt entrance and Inauguration, but 'tis a dayly Tribute; the *juge ſacrificium*, the dayly ſacrifice. The fire of this Altar never ſhould go out: *Daniel*'s thrice-a-day prayer, *David*'s ſeven times a day, ſhews the diligence and conſtancy of this worſhip and ſervice. B

2. This frequency argues a delight and joy in this worſhip; and 'tis a ſign of a wicked man, that he takes no comfort or joy in God, when he is ſo ſeldom in this action, *Job* xxvii. 10. *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? will he alwayes call upon God?* And God charges it upon the *Jews*, that they grew weary of this ſervice, and diſuſed it, and gave it over, *Eſai.* xliii. 22. *Thou haſt not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou haſt been weary of me, O Iſrael.* As they in *Malachi* cryed out, *Chap.* i. 13. *Behold, what a wearineſs is it?* Whereas all ſpiritual prayer delights it ſelf in frequency, rejoyces alwayes to come into God's preſence. But, C

(2.) In particular, this prayer of *Agur* muſt have an edg and ſtrength put upon it by frequency and conſtancy. It is a prayer againſt worldlly mindedneſs, it ſeeks and ſues for the grace of Contentation. The ſubduing of that corruption, the attaining of that heavenly Temper, is not eaſily compaſſed. A few Prayers will not ſerve the turn. Indeed for ſome rare men, that are not acquainted with this corruption, they may be more ſecure. As *Luther* profeſſes of himſelf, He never felt a temptation of covetouſneſs. God had framed his heart againſt that ſin. But for moſt, 'tis a ſin that hangs faſteſt on, it grows upon a man. And therefore we muſt do in this caſe, as they that will dig up a Tree deeply rooted, we muſt ſet to it amain, it is not one ſtroke or pull that will root it up. The world hath many ſnares, and will twiſt about thee. This ſin, D

1. It is a laſting ſin; like ſome ſeeds, ſow them but once, and they will alwayes grow and multiply.

2. It is a ſober ſin, no beaſtly luſt; as Drunkenneſs. E

3. It is a rational ſin, it pleads with many Arguments:

(1.) They are God's bleſſings, We cannot have too much of them.

(2.) We muſt provide for hereafter, ſecure our ſelves from contempt and want; lay up for poſterity.

(3.) 'Tis the Wiſe man's practice, all the world runs this way. How need we with *Paul* pray, and beſeech the Lord againſt theſe buffetings. That's

A That's the first expression, *I have required of thee.* Now follows the other.

II. *Deny me them not.* That seconds, and backs, and enforces his former Petition. And we will resolve the strength, and purpose of this Petition into these expressions.

1. *Deny me them not*, or withhold them not from me. It ascribes unto God *absolutam potestatem:* It is a real confession and acknowledgment of his absolute power and sovereign dominion over all these blessings, that his Prayer look'd at. All are in his hands. He, the supreme Lord. The least grain of Grace, the smallest crumb of bread, any drop
B of comfort, all are his own, in his hand and disposal. This *David* acknowledges, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 12. *Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.* So *Moses*, Deut. x. 19. *Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the* LORD'S *thy God, the earth also, with all that is therein.* So *Psal.* xxiv. 1. *The earth is the* LORD'S, *and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein.*

The use and benefit of them he may allow us; but the dominion and original Title he holds in his own hand, as a part of his prerogative and flower of his Crown. He claims and challenges this to himself, *Ezek.* xvi. 19. *My meat, my fine flower, and oyl, and honey,* all his. So *Hag.* ii. 8. *The Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine, saith the* LORD *of hosts. Chrysostom* professes he often smiled to read the wills of rich men in their Bequeathments: *I give the dominion and title of such Lands to such an one*; the *usum fructum* to such another, he shall be supreme Lord of them, another shall reap the profits of them: whereas we all have the use. Πάντες τῶν χρήσιν ἔχομεν, δεσπόται δὲ οὐδείς, saith the Father.

The due consideration of this would keep us from over-much Lord-
D ing it in our goods and possessions. Thy Tenure is but Frank-almoine; the best are meer beneficiaries, the supreme right rests still in God. This we may see in God's order of Creation. All Creatures were made before man, the world was stored with riches before man was created. Man is younger brother to all the Creatures, a *post-natus* to this Title. Nay, to teach us, that we hold in service from him, he expresses his Lordship in Man's Creation. At the making of all other Creatures, *Moses* calls him God; *God created the heaven and the earth*, &c. But *the* LORD *God created man of the dust of the ground*, Gen. ii. 7. He assumes to himself the Lordship, lest man
E should usurp it.

2. *Deny them me not*; it ascribes to God *efficacem donationem*. His denyal, 'tis an effectual with-holding; his granting, 'tis a real collation, and possessing us of them. Men's grants are empty and verbal oft-times, they cannot alwayes put us into the possession of what they intend to us; and men's denyals too are often insufficient. But God's Word is powerful. If he say nay to our desires, denies his consent to our motions, no toyl,

Sermon. I.

no labour can compaſs our ends, *Job* xi. 10. *If he cut off, or ſhut up, or gather together, who can hinder him?* Without his grant, 'tis in vain for you to *riſe up early*, and to *ſit up late*, to *eat the bread of ſorrow*, Pſal. cxxvii. 2. If he deny thee the power of getting any bleſſing, ſee how unſucceſsful and bootleſs, your labours will be, *Hag.* i. 6. *Ye have ſown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled; you cloath you; but there is no warmth; and he that earns wages, earns wages to put it into a bag with holes. He blows upon it*, Verſ. 9. He ſayes not *Amen* to thy deſires. God's not denying is not a bare permiſſion, to turn us looſe to ſhift for our ſelves; but 'tis a real effectual furniſhing of us. A

It muſt teach us to know the power of his Word, the efficacy of his grants, the force of his denyal. It would make us in all our buſineſſes begin at the right end, ask his leave and allowance, take him along with us in all our purſuits. It hath made the Saints of God firſt to conſult with him, to get his allowance; as good *Jehoſhaphat*, *Let's ask at the mouth of the* LORD; like *David*, he calls for the Ephod, *Shall I go out? wilt thou go with me?* So *Moſes* deters the people from entring upon the Land of *Canaan*; *Go not up, the* LORD *is not among you*, Numb. xiv. 42. Even *Balaam* had this wiſdom to ask leave of God. If he be againſt us, he takes off the wheels of the Chariots, makes them drive heavily, no purſuits are proſperous. If *Jonah* againſt God's Word, will to *Tarſhiſh*, a ſtrong ſhip ſhall not ſecure him; to *Niniveh*, a devouring fiſh ſhall convey him. See how *Balaam* ſped, *Thy God hath kept thee from preferment. At thy word, Maſter*, ſaith *Peter*, *we will caſt in the net.* B

Take we heed then how we *ſacrifice to our own nets*, and *burn incenſe unto our Drag*, Hab. i. 16. how we give the honour and thanks of our attainments to ſecond cauſes, to our own wits, power, induſtry: *how we kiſs our own hand*, Job xxxi. 27. that is, aſcribe what we have to our own forecaſt and laborioufneſs. Remember that of *Solomon*, *'Tis the bleſſing of the* LORD *that makes rich*, Prov. x. 22. So *Deut.* viii. 18. *'Tis God that gives power to get wealth.* Take heed of the *Aſſyrian*'s boaſting, *He ſaith, by the ſtrength of my hand have I done it, and by my wiſdom; for I am prudent, and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures, and I have put down the Inhabitants of the earth, as a valiant man*, Eſa. x. 13. Learn rather the Language of *Eleazar*; *God hath bleſt my Maſter greatly, and he is thereby become great; he hath given him flocks, and herds, and gold, and ſilver, and ſervants*, Gen. xxiv. 35. The Language of *Job*, *The* LORD *hath given*, Chap. i. 21. the Language of *Jacob*, *The children that God of his grace hath given me*, Gen. xxxiii. 5. Say with St. *Paul*, Rom. xi. 36. *Of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* C D E

That's the ſecond expreſſion; it aſcribes to God *efficacem donationem.*

3. *Deny them me not*, Supply my life with neceſſaries, it implies *perſonalem diſtributionem.* The Faith of this holy man relies not upon common providence; but ſues for a ſpecial particular perſonal proviſion.

A sion. 'Tis next to Atheism and plain Infidelity, to ascribe to God only a common providence, that he doth in the general furnish the world, and store it with sufficiency, so leaving us to our own industry, catch that catch can, and make it our own. No, Faith sees God near at hand, places him not in the circle of heaven, barely beholding men scattered on the face of the earth, and forraging for themselves. No, his providence and care, *pertinet ad singulos.* He hath a personal eye open, and ear bow'd down, and hand stretched out to every one. In our coming into the world, *in his Book were all our members written*; in our dwellings he leaves us not loose, but *hath determined the bounds of our habi-*
B *tation.* We live all upon his finding. In common plenty he can punish with personal scarcity; as he did the Prince of *Samaria.* In general scarcity, he can furnish with personal plenty; as *Elijah* did the *Sareptan* Widow.

And this differenceth the Faith of a good Christian from the belief of a carnal man in God's administrations. A worldly man, may be, allows God a general inspection, thinks he *holds up the pillars of the earth,* but perceives not that God takes care of particulars, and so resolves to live by his wits, and shift for himself. But a good Christian sees him at home, and so casts himself into his arms, and receives every
C comfort as reach'd out of heaven by God's immediate hand.

That's the third expression, and implies *personalem distributionem.*

4. *Deny them me not,* it implies *sanctam importunitatem,* 'tis a Speech of earnestness and holy importunity. 'Tis *indoles fidei,* the holy confidence, that faith hath in Gods gracious inclinaton to it; it delights to be importunate; it will admit no denyals, take no nay at God's hands. A wicked worldly man is utterly ignorant of this holy art of gettting in with God. If God answer not presently, he flings off from God, as the King of *Israel, Why should I wait for the Lord any longer,* 2 King. vi. 33.

D (1.) Out of a listlessness to pray; 'tis dull and harsh to a carnal man, no relish, no savour in it; Oh! to a Saint, 'tis marrow and fatness.

(2.) Out of a strangeness with God: A man may be bold and importunate with his Friend, and so Christians are with God, whom they know *de proximo.* But worldly men have no such interest, they cannot press upon him.

(3.) There is a secret guiltiness in the hearts of wicked men, that damps all their devotion; their hearts mis-give them, that they shall not be accepted. But faith in a Christian fastens upon God, *strives and*
E *fights in Prayer,* as St. *Paul* calls it; *wrestles with him,* as *Jacob, I will not let thee go.* Oh! *Hæc vis Deo grata est.* God loves to be urged with this holy importunity. The *Canaanitish* Woman, her clamouring after Christ (as the Disciples called it) was musick in Christ's ears. Yet, though Faith, it will not be denyed, it will limit its desires. As *Bathsheba,* though *Solomon* would not deny her, yet she sits down with a negative.

1. Im-

Sermon. I.

1. Importunity must be with submission if convenient, as she yields to *Solomon*; *I will not say thee Nay*, yet he did so, 1 *King.* ii. 20.

2. It must go no further then a Promise. Faith laying hold of a Promise, may be bold and importunate.

3. When God declares his peremptory denyal, then we must rest satisfied. As *Moses* often besought God to let him go into the Land of *Canaan*; but after express denyal (*Speak no more to me of this matter*) he gives over.

So much of the Form of *Agur*'s Prayer, *I have required them of thee, deny them me not.* The next is,

Secondly, The Matter and Sum of his Petition; *Two things.* Strange! is this all the compass and extent of his desires? It may seem,

I. To strengthen the bounty and fulness of God. Hast thou but two blessings to bestow? No doubt, he hath store of mercies.

II. To strengthen the vertue and efficacy of Prayer; can it reach but to two mercies? It is *Condus, & Promus cœli*, set over all God's Store-houses; 'tis the Key, that opens all his Treasures. There is no mercy shut up from Prayer. It hath a kind of omnipotency; *Whatsoever ye shall ask, believe, and it shall be done.* 'Tis *organum* ὀργάνων, as an hand fit for all works. Prayer will enlarge it self in all manner of supplications; *In all things, let your Prayer be made known.* Or,

III. Is it *Pudor, & verecundia orationis?* as if seldom asking, and for a few favours, would move God to grant. 'Tis so among men; not to be troublesom, to ask seldom, makes men to grant. And carnal men think it good manners, not to be troublesom to God. As *Ahaz* would not trouble God to work miracles. *Non vult divinæ misericordiæ oneri esse.* No; God delights in frequent Petitions; like a living Fountain, the oftner drawn, the more it springs. God never stops in giving, till we stop in Praying. The Widows vessels fail before the Oil failed.

What means then holy *Agur* in summing up his desires into this small number, reducing them to *two?*

1. *Two things:* Take the Petitions in the full extent and latitude; *Remove from me vanity and lies, feed me with food convenient for me*; so they are reducible to the two main Heads and Principles of all desires;

1. The good of the Soul.
2. The good of the Body.

1. *Remove from me vanity and lies*; that provides for the Soul and the spiritual estate; purge, sanctifie that.

2. *Feed me with food convenient for me*; that provides for the Body, the outward man, and our natural condition. God hath two hands; he hath the blessings of his right hand in spiritual graces; and the blessings of his left hand in temporal mercies. And answerably, Faith hath two hands; stretches out its right hand, *Oh! keep me from sin*; then its left hand; *feed me with food convenient.* So

Paul

A *Paul* tells us of two promiſes made to religion, the *promiſe of this life*, and *of that which is to come*; 1 Tim. iv. 8. The principal indeed, that's the Soul; but then the Body hath his ſhare. It was the Heathen's Wiſh, *Mentem ſanam in corpore ſano*, a *ſober mind in a ſound body*: Whereas moſt men pray, as if they were all body, no ſoul: all for health, and food, and outward comforts.

2. *Two things*; He reduces his deſires and prayers, to a narrow compaſs. He is ſolicitous *de neceſſariis*; takes no thought of ſuperfluities. In outward and temporal bleſſings, 'tis Chriſtian wiſdom to cut ſhort, and contract our deſires into a narrow room. A tolerable paſ-
B ſage through the world, and a comfortable paſſage out of the world; here is all a Chriſtian ſeeks after. As the *Iſraelites* ſaid to the King of *Edom*, *Let's but go through your high-way in peace*. Whereas the wiſhes, and diſtractions, and cravings of carnal men, they are infinite and endleſs *They enlarge their deſires as Hell*, Hab. ii. 5. As *Auguſtine* ſhews the multiplying wiſhes of Parents for their children, *An pulchri, an Ingenioſi, an Divites, an Honorati?* Faith anſwers all; a few things, two things neceſſary only. Whatſoever is more then this, 'tis *ex malo*, it comes from evil.

3. *Two things*; he ſues for eſpecially, more frequently, they were
C his daily petitions; *Keep me from vanity and lies*: He prayed againſt all ſin, his ſpight was not only againſt theſe; True, yet thoſe ſins the ſpirit of this holy man did more loath and abhor. He deſired all graces and vertues, and all fitting comforts; but, above all, contentation with a little. A childe of God, though he muſt abound in all manner of Prayer; yet 'tis his practice and wiſdom to fix eſpecially upon ſome chief requeſts. Doſt thou finde thy ſelf more prone to ſuch a ſin? leſs diſpoſed to ſuch a duty? Double thy Prayers here, beſtow coſt upon this neceſſary duty. As *Chryſoſtom* was ſo zealous againſt ſwearing, that in every Sermon he inveighed againſt it. St. *John* ad-
D dicted to the love of Chriſt, all his Epiſtles beat upon that. St. *Paul* ſo deeply affected with the grace of Chriſt, that it colours all his writings, every page falls upon this. Know what ſins thou art moſt inclined to, what graces thou moſt ſtandeſt in need of; and let thy Prayers ſtrive againſt thoſe ſins, and wreſtle for thoſe graces. Art thou voluptuous? art thou covetous? art thou revengeful? then ſay, *Two things I require*. *David*'s Love to God's houſe had the preheminence of all his Petitions; *One thing have I deſired of the* LORD, *that I may viſit his Temple*.

So I have done with the ſecond Particular, in the 'propoſal of his
E Petition, the Matter, and ſum of his Prayer, which is for *two things*. Come we now to the third; which is,

Thirdly, The Date and Seaſon, that he ſets to his deſires, *Until I die*; *Tantiſper dum vivo*. And this meaſure and proportion of time in his Prayer, it hath a double uſe:

I. 'Tis a term of Extenſion.

II. 'Tis a term of Limitation.

There

Sermon. I.

There is a length in it, and there is is a ſtint and period in it.

I. Let's ſee the Extenſion and length, that is in this ſcantling, *Untill I die*; And here is a two-fold extenſion:

1. Here is *extenſio neceſſitatis*. Its ſets out unto us the length and continuance of our ſtate of neceſſities and dependencies. We cannot be exempted from the caſualties of outward things: may be now rich, anon, or hereafter poor: now we may have a competency; e're we die, by courſe of natural cauſes, we may come to beggary. To all men, in general, this life, 'tis the vale of mutabilities and changes: no ſtability, no certainty. *Solomon* tells us, *Eccleſ.* ix. 11, &c. *The Race is not to the ſwift, nor the Battel to the ſtrong, neither yet Bread to the wiſe, nor yet Riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet Favours to men of skill; but time, and chance happens to them all: for man alſo knows not his time, as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the ſnare, ſo are the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it falls ſuddenly upon them.* *David*, a King, thought himſelf ſetled, his hill was ſo ſtrong, how ſoon was he troubled? *Pſal.* xxx. 7. *Job* thought he ſhould die in his neſt, in conſtant proſperity, yet how overcaſt? *Solomon*'s counſel is good, *Prov.* xxvii. 1. *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow; for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.* An elegant ſimilitude; as if a woman ſhould boaſt ſhe ſhall have ſuch a childe, a man, or fair, or wiſe; no, thou knoweſt not what ſhall be the fruit of thy womb. Remember *Haman*'s change, little thought he to hang on his own Gallows. Little knoweſt thou what is in the womb of the night, or what will be the fruit of the morning. *Until I die*;

2. Here is, *extenſio Fidei*. *Agur*'s faith by Prayer provides for his eſtate, until he die. 'Tis true, our life naturally is full of varieties; I, but Faith provides for it by a bleſſed dependency upon God. Here is the fathom of Faith, ſecures a mans eſtate, even till death. Men without Faith, though full of projects, in truth live all at adventure, *ex tempore*, without this forecaſt. Here is the art of a Chriſtian. Is this life ſo full of hazards? may I be now rich? e're I die, a Beggar? I will engage my ſelf by Faith and Prayer, and holy reliance on God's care; *Take thou care of me till I die*, Pſal. xlviii. 14. *This God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guid even unto death*; as Merchants fearing Shipwrack, go to the Aſſuring-houſe; what e're comes, they ſhall not loſe all. A Ship, that rides at anchor, faſtened to a rock, cannot be caſt away: Faith caſts anchor in God, provides for the whole life: *Caſt me not off in the time of old age, forſake me not, when my ſtrength fails.*

Having viewed the Extenſion:

II. Let's ſee the Limitation. *Before I die*: 'tis *Terminus limitationis*; it hath the uſe and purpoſe of a ſtint and bound, and due limitation.

1. *Before I die*; 'tis *limitatio orationis*, I muſt enquire and beg of thee, till I die. This life indeed is, or ſhould be moſt ſpent in Prayer, and

A and unfolding our desires. We are yet but Petitioners and cravers; I, but that duty hath its date. When we die, we take our leave of Prayer, and change it to a more chearful and comfortable exercise of Praise and Thanksgiving. In this Valley of wants and tears, all our help and comfort is to cry and call to God. The many necessities of soul and body keep this Duty in action and use; but heaven is the holy hill of Thanksgiving. Faith and Prayer are the lame man's stilts or crutches, they pass us over to heaven, and leave us. Then *peribit labor, & gemitus: transeunt orationes, succedunt laudationes*, Aug. Then we shall say with the Martyr, Farewel Faith; farewel Hope; welcome Love:
B then shall we turn our *Hosannas* into *Halelujahs*.

2. *Before I die*, 'tis *limitatio solicitudinis*. See here *Agur* solicitous for supplies of life, *Feed me with food convenient*; I, 'tis but *tantisper*, whilest he lives. True, say you, that's the bound of all our desires; who looks beyond death? Yes, yes; this stint of time hath a virtue in it.

1. The explicit thought of it seasons all our desires and cravings; In thy cares to think all these comforts must end in death, it will moderate, sanctifie, eat out the carnality and worldliness of them. This sad thought, *All my gettings be but to bring me to my long home*,
C *but to last me to my grave*; it would put a blessed temper into thee, and cause thee to say, in the heat of all thy pursuits, as the Widow of *Sarepta* to *Elijah*, 1 King. xvii. 12. *I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress this handful of Meal, and the little Oil that remains for me and for my son, that we may eat it and die.* And as it will season; so,

2. It will proportion all our desires; *I desire but till I die*; then what should I do with more, then will serve for my passage? Mariners praying for a near haven, will not victual, as for a long voyage. At the farthest our Voyage is not long, and a fair winde may
D give me speed. Wilt thou lade thy self with provision beyond all likelihood of expence? *Magno viatico breve iter non instruitur, sed oneratur. Tempus in contracto est. Brethren, the time is short, it remains that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and those that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passes away*, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

So I have done with the first Particular in the Text, *viz.* the Summary proposal of his Prayer: Come we now to the second, which is,

E Secondly, The Particular expressing and unfolding of his Prayer, Vers. 8. *Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.* Here we have the expression of his two main capital desires and Petitions.

First, The first, that respects his soul, and spiritual estate, and the welfare of it. A Prayer for freedom from sin and impiety, *Remove far from me vanity and lies.*

Sermon. I.

Secondly, The ſecond, that reſpects his body, and temporal eſtate, and the welfare of it. A Prayer for a competency and neceſſary proviſion for this preſent life; *Feed me with food convenient for me.* Theſe two, freedom from ſin, and freedom from worldly cares and diſtractions, that we may cleave to the Lord without diſtraction, 'tis *Agur*'s Prayer, and ought to be the ſum of every good Chriſtian's deſires and Prayers. A

Before we come to the particulars; the method and order of this holy man's Devotion is obſervable. There is an holy art of framing our Petitions in a right order. What's the firſt, and the great, and principal deſire of a Chriſtian, that takes up his chiefeſt thoughts, that which hath the birth-right of his Devotions? 'Tis his Prayer for ſpiritual graces and bleſſings, that hath the precedency. *Keep far from me vanity and lies.* And this Petition hath the firſt place for divers reaſons. B

I. *Hæc petitio reſpicit animam*; he provides for his ſoul in this Prayer. And the Soul of a man, and the care for it, muſt have the precedency, as being the principal, chiefeſt, nobleſt part of man. The excellency of a man is his ſoul and ſpirit; that by which he exceeds all other creatures; his immortal and divine part. Great reaſon the firſt and chiefeſt of our cares ſhould be for it. The body, is the Servant; the ſoul, that's the Maſter and Lord of the body. And Chriſt ſhews us, *Luke* xvii. 7, 8. who muſt be firſt ſerved, the Maſter, or the Servant: *Will any man ſay to his ſervant, firſt go, and ſit down to meat? and will not rather ſay, Make ready wherewith I may ſup, and gird thy ſelf, and ſerve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterwards thou ſhalt eat and drink.* *Abraham*'s ſervant refuſed to refreſh himſelf, till he had diſpatched his Maſter's work. And ſhall the Body that is *ſervus*, and *jumentum animæ*, be firſt taken thought for, and our ſoul neglected? C

II. *Hæc Petitio reſpicit ſalutem æternam*, 'tis a Prayer that concerns ſalvation, and our eternal eſtate; that's *maximum bonum*, the chiefeſt good, and that challenges the firſt place in all our deſires. Freedom from Sin, that provides for eternity, that ſecures our immortal welfare: freedom from worldly cares and perplexities, that's a ſecurity only for our tranſitory and momentany condition. 'Tis our wiſdom, firſt to provide for perpetuity, that that eſtate which is endleſs and everlaſting, may be made happy to us; then in the ſecond place, thou mayeſt take care for the preſent. Men beſtow more coſt upon that which is their own for ever, then they will upon that which they hold only for a term of years, that ſoon will be expired. D

III. This Petition hath the precedency; becauſe the granting of this requeſt brings with it the granting alſo of the ſecond Petition for temporal bleſſings. Freedom from Sin, and ſupply of Grace, hath the promiſe of temporal welfare entailed unto it; *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. *Acceſſorium ſequitur principale.* He that enjoyes the principal, ſhall enjoy all the Appertenances, that belong to it. Our Saviour teaches us this art of Prayer, *Matth.* vi. 33. E

He,

A He, that ſees mens thoughts taken up with theſe cares, *What ſhall we eat? What ſhall we drink? Wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed?* Theſe are the chiefeſt thoughts of men. No, the way is, ſaith Chriſt, *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added to you.* The inverſion will not hold; *Firſt, ſeek food and rayment, and Grace and heaven ſhall be added.* Heaven is no acceſſory additament, but a principal. God never flings heaven into the bargain; but tempotal things are given in over and above. Thus *Solomon* got riches and honour, by asking Grace and Wiſdom in the firſt place, 1 *King.* ii. 11. *The Speech pleaſed the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing; I*
B *have alſo given thee that which thou haſt not asked, riches and honour.* Learn to begin at the right end, *Rom.* viii. 32.

IV. This Petition hath the precedency; before he prayes for neceſſary food for the comforts of this life, he makes his Prayer firſt againſt his ſins. Till they be removed, they hinder our acceſs to any temporal bleſſing. The leaſt ſin unremoved, makes us unworthy of the leaſt comfort. A Sinner cannot with any comfort or confidence reach out his hand for a morſel of bread. Indeed God, in the courſe of common providence, allows wicked men ſupplies of life: *He fills their bellies with hid treaſures,* Pſal. xvii. 14. When his enemies hunger, he feeds them;
C when they thirſt, he gives them drink. But with favour and fatherly allowance he gives us theſe comforts when Sin is removed. *Joſeph* firſt reconciles himſelf to his brethren; then ſets them at his Table. The Father firſt pardons his Prodigal; then kills the fatted Calf for him. Wouldeſt thou be fed, as God feeds the Beaſts; nay, his enemies, whom he reſerves to the day of ſlaughter? then ruſh upon this Petition; but if as a childe, then beg firſt removal of Sin.

Object. *But, in the Lord's Prayer, firſt we beg* Bread, *then* pardon of *Sins?*

Anſwer;

D 1. That Holy Prayer is framed for thoſe that be actually reconciled, and can call God Father; the main fundamental forgiveneſs is obtained, and preſuppoſed. Indeed, our dayly failings muſt be daily bewailed.

2. Before we beg Bread, we ſeek God's Glory, his Kingdom, obedience to his Will; then temporal bleſſings.

3. Chriſt's method there frames theſe Petitions firſt, which tend to the attaining of ſome poſitive good, God's Glory, Kingdom, Grace to do his Will; after frames Petitions to depreeate removal of evils.

E 4. This Prayer in the main drift, 'tis for ſpiritual things. The three Petitions before, for ſpirituals; the three after, for ſpirituals. This for Bread is placed in the midſt, as a *Viaticum*, or Bait in our journey to Heaven. A Chriſtian begins at Gods glory, paſſes on through ſpiritual Duties, till he ends at God's glory. *Daily Bread* is like a man's Inn, in the mid-way to relieve and refreſh him; his *diverſorium itineris*, for him to bait at.

Sermon. I.

5. Thoſe after-petitions, Pardon of Treſpaſſes, freedom from Temptations, deliverance from Evil, are to be obtained in this life; here, or never, Sin muſt be pardoned, Satan vanquiſhed, evil of Sin avoided: therefore a Prayer for this life prefixed, becauſe life is the ſeaſon and foundation of theſe things; *Lord, maintain my life, that I may make ſure the pardon of my ſins, vanquiſh Satan, finiſh my courſe with joy.*

Notwithſtanding theſe reaſons, the priority of our Prayers muſt be firſt for pardon of ſins; till then, no ſpiritual Chriſtian right to the comforts of this life.

V. This Petition hath the precedency; being to pray for competency and contentation, firſt he prayes againſt theſe Sins of Vanity and Lies; becauſe theſe vain and fooliſh luſts, they are the only cauſes and provocations to worldly deſires. What makes men diſcontented with a ſmall portion, to murmur at God's dealings, as if he kept them ſhort? 'Tis the noyſomneſs of vain luſts, that are craving and reſtleſs. St. *James* ſhews the original of them, *James* iv. 1. *From whence come wars and fightings? come they not hence, even out of your luſts that war in your members? Ye luſt and deſire to have.* Doſt thou deſire contentment with any portion? abate thy vain luſts and deſires; get ſober, and ſetled, compoſed thoughts, and any thing then will give thee ſatisfaction.

Tantum de ordine.

Thus much for the Method, and Order of this Holy man's Devotion.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON ON PROV. XXX. 8.

Remove far from me Vanity and Lies; ——

COme we now to the particular Petition; *Remove far from me vanity and lies.* In it two things:

First, Is the Evil he prayes againſt, that's *Vanity and Lies.*

Secondly, Is the Prayer he makes againſt it, the freedom he deſires from it, *Remove it far from me.*

First, The Evil he prayes againſt, *Vanity and Lies.* Commonly, in Scripture, they are put for the ſame thing. And then in Scripture we meet with a double Vanity. *Vanity* is taken,

I. In a Natural ſenſe.

II. In a Moral and Vicious ſenſe.

I. In a Natural ſenſe, and ſo every Creature is ſaid to be vain; and that in a double degree:

1. There is Vanity *in Origine*, in the very being and nature of it; there is a vanity in the Creature, a weakneſs and impotency, an emptineſs and inſufficiency in it, compared with, and divided from God. Every Creature in his beſt condition hath a ſeed of Vanity and weakneſs in it. The Original of all things was *Nihil*, made of Nothing; and that which came out of Nothing, inclines of it ſelf unto Nothing. Nothing, 'tis *ſeminarium vanitatis*, the ſpawn of Vanity. *Every man, in his beſt eſtate, is altogether vanity*, Pſal. xxxix. 5. even becauſe our Original is Nothing. *Homo, terræ filius, nihili nepos*; that's our Pedigree.

2. There is in the Creature a lower degree of vanity, a vanity of deficiency, and decay in it, in that 'tis fallen from the Original. Of it ſelf, in its Original, it would have faded; but now by our fall it is blaſted with vanity. *All the creatures are now ſubject unto vanity*, Rom. viii. 20. Now all of us are Vanity; we are no more *Iſh*, but *Enoſh*; not Strength, but Vanity; the beſt of us. *Pſal.* lxii. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, (ſeeming*, but not *being.) To be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.*

That's Natural Vanity.

II. There

Serm. II.

II. There is a moral, and a vicious, culpable Vanity, and 'tis that *David* ſpeaks of, *Pſal.* iv. 2. *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye love Vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* So then take theſe two words as Identical, or elſe conſider Lies, as diſtinct here from the ſin of Vanity.

1. Take them together; and ſo in general, *All ſin is Vanity*, and a Lie. Piety, and Sanctity, and Innocency, 'tis called *Truth*, Joh. vii. 44. *The Devil abode not in the Truth*, that is, *in his ſtate of innocency and integrity*. So *Job*, Chap. xxxi. 5. calls a ſinful courſe, *a walking with vanity*; *If I have walked with vanity*; and Saint *Peter* calls a ſinful life, *a vain converſation*, 1 Pet. i. 18. *Redeemed from your vain converſation*. And ſo a Sinner is called *a vain man*, Prov. xii. 12. *He that follows vain perſons, is void of underſtanding*. 2 Chron. xiii. 7. *There gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial*, wicked perſons. Thus *David* prayed againſt all ſin: *Lord, turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*, Pſal. cxix. 37. And *Solomon* calls a ſinners life, *the dayes of his vanity*, Eccleſ. vii. 15.

Sin is Vanity,

(1.) *In origine*. Vanity is the Original of Sin. That very Original of man, that he is made of nothing, a decaying, mutable, fading Creature, is the firſt womb of ſin. Sin draws not its being from God, the fountain of all ſolid goodneſs; but it ariſes from that deficiency that is inbred in us, by which we tend unto nothing; and ſo ſin is void and empty of any ſolid, real goodneſs; 'tis nothing but want, loſs, emptineſs, defect, decay, privation. All that God made, had fulneſs of goodneſs in it; but our ſin, it is as ruſt to Gold, as darkneſs to the Air, as ſickneſs to the Body, as a ſtain unto Beauty: 'tis the fading, decaying, vaniſhing, mouldring away of our glory and excellency. Sin is Vanity,

(2.) *In uſu*; a vain, meer ſuperfluous thing, it hath no place, nor rank amongſt all God's Creatures. All things of God's making are uſeful and beneficial: Take any out of its place, the world would be maimed and imperfect. *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time*, Eccleſ. iii. 11. Ask not, Why is this, or that? for every thing is good in his ſeaſon. Only Sin is vain and unprofitable; no good, or profit in it. That's *vanum*, that ſerves *nulli uſui*. Sin, a meer ſuperfluity. *James* i. 21. *Lay aſide the ſuperfluity of naughtineſs*. *Paul* calls them *the unfruitful works of darkneſs*, Epheſ. iv. 11. *What profit have you in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed?* Rom. vi. 21. Sin is Vanity,

(3.) *In exercitio*; nothing but emptineſs and vanity, unſatisfying in the practice of it. In all honeſt labour, there is ſome ſatisfaction. The heart of a man, by God's bleſſing, enjoyes ſome comfort in it; but, he that follows vain perſons ſhall have no ſatisfaction. *It is, as when an hungry man dreams, and, behold! he eateth; but he awakes, and his ſoul is empty: or, as when a thirſty man dreams, and, behold! he drinks; but he awakes, and, behold! he is faint, and his ſoul hath appetite*, Eſai. xxix. 8. This is repreſented in the food of the Prodigal, he fed on huſks; the food of ſin, 'tis an empty huſk, no foiſon, or ſtrength of ſatisfaction in it. Sin is Vanity,

(4.) *In*

A (4.) *In effectu*, it makes a man vain. A ſinner is a vain creature, it brings vanity upon him:

1. That's *vanum*, that is *fruſtra, ſine ſuo excidit*. Sin makes man vain, it fruſtrates and puts him by his main end. Man was made to a noble end, to ſerve and enjoy God, and to be united to him; but ſin doth diſappoint this end, croſſes the end and aim of his creation. It made God repent that ever he made man; *Gen.* vi. 6. *When God ſaw the wickedneſs of men, it repented the* LORD *that he made man in the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* It makes a man, as if he were created in vain; as *David* bemoans the vanity of mankinde in his haſte, *Wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain?* Pſal. lxxxix. 47.

B 2. It brings much vanity upon man, it debaſes his excellency, makes him *as one of the fools in Iſrael*, 2 Sam. xii. 13. layes his honour in the duſt. It puts into us vain imaginations, *Rom.* i. 21. *Their cogitations are vain*, their fooliſh hearts deceive them.

3. It makes men vain, becauſe it fruſtrates their own deſired ends. A ſinner is deceived of his own expectations, he ſhall not obtain his wiſhed-for ends. *Prov.* xxii. 8. *He that ſows iniquity, ſhall reap vanity.* Eccleſ. v. 16. *He hath laboured for the wind, he ſhall ſee*

C *no good.* Thus *Job* deſcribes a ſinner, *I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not*, Chap. xxxiii. 27. Hence *David* calls them *lying vanities*, Pſal. xxxi. *He hath travelled with iniquity, and conceived miſchief; but he ſhall bring forth a Lie*; that is, *the thing he expects ſhall fail him.* Sin promiſes much, but in the birth no performance, nothing but a Lie. *In the end*, ſaith *Jeremy, he is a Fool*, he miſſes his main aim, labours all in vain. That's extreme folly to miſs of his main end, *to weary themſelves for very vanity*, Hab. ii. 13.

D 2. Take Lying ſeveral, and apart, *Agur* prayes againſt it. A ſin oppoſite to that vertue and grace of Truth, which ſhould ſanctifie, and ſeaſon our ſpeech and converſation; when, with all good conſcience, in all our ſpeeches with any man, we be careful to utter nothing but Truth.

For better underſtanding the nature of this ſin, we will take notice of it in a double conſideration:

(1.) By conſideration of the vertue of Truth, to which Lying is oppoſite.

(2.) By conſideration of this ſin of falſeneſs, and Lying in it ſelf.

E (1.) By conſidering the vertue of Truth. A Duty ſtrictly required in Scripture. Our Saviour enjoyns it, *Let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay*, Matth. v. 37. *Put away lying, and ſpeak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members one of another*, Epheſ. iv. 25.

For further opening of this ſo neceſſary a Duty, let's make theſe two Enquiries:

1. What this Truth is, and wherein it conſiſts?

2. How it may be uttered; with what conditions and qualifications?

1. *What*

Sermon II.

1. *What is Truth?* Pilate asked it ſcornfully; but the queſtion is profitable. It ſtands in three things:

1. It ſtands in a conformity betwixt our thoughts, and the thing it ſelf of which we ſpeak. We muſt be careful ſo to conceive of things, as they are indeed; we muſt be careful, that our underſtandings be rightly informed. This *Job* practiſed, *Chap.* xxix. 16. *The cauſe which I knew not, I ſearched out.* Labour to avoid raſh apprehenſions.

2. It ſtands in a conformity of our ſpeech with our thoughts. As we muſt think as the thing is; ſo we muſt ſpeak as we think. Our thoughts muſt be the image, and true repreſentation of the thing; and then our ſpeech muſt be the image, and true repreſentation of our thoughts. Thus *David* deſcribes it, Pſal. xv. 2. *He ſpeaks the truth in his heart.* *Mentiri, contra mentem ire.*

3. It ſtands in a deſire and purpoſe of communicating this Truth to thoſe with whom we ſpeak; in a deſire of begetting the ſame knowledge in others, that we have our ſelves; a deſire of giving a juſt, and even information of what we know, and concerns us to manifeſt.

2. What are thoſe Caveats and Conditions we muſt obſerve in ſpeaking the Truth? 'Tis not ſufficient for us to ſpeak that, which is truth, but there is a graceful manner to be practiſed in our ſpeech.

1. We muſt ſpeak truth out of a love of Truth. We muſt delight in ſpeaking the Truth. We muſt get an habit of Truth in us, get the law of truth into us. Thus *Paul* profeſſes his love to Truth, *We can ſay nothing againſt the truth, but for it,* 2 Cor. xiii. 8. We muſt take a felicity in ſeaſoning our ſpeeches with it. Thus *Solomon, A faithful witneſs ſpeaks truth,* that is, delights in it. It hates backwardneſs, to be haled and tortured with examinations, e're ever we will ſpeak truth.

2. We muſt ſpeak truth freely. No fear or diſcouragement muſt drive us to ſwallow down the Truth, or conceal it. Thus thoſe three Worthies in *Daniel, Shadrach, Meſhach,* and *Abednego,* they were not careful, that is, not fearful to anſwer the King, to profeſs their meaning. There is an honeſt boldneſs, that ſhould attend the truth; we ſhould have an holy confidence, not to ſhrink from it. Thus *Job* xxvii. 3. *All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God in my noſtrils, my lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor my tongue utter deceit.* This boldneſs was in *Peter,* Acts iv. 20. *We cannot but ſpeak what we have heard and ſeen.* Before he ſhrunk for fear; We muſt be valiant for the truth, *Jer.* ix. 3. He complains, They bend their tongues like Bows for lies, draw a lie up to the head, but are not valiant for the truth.

3. A third condition of Truth is Diſcretion, and Chriſtian prudence; not unſeaſonably or unadviſedly to utter all that thou knoweſt; but as the rule of religious honeſty and diſcretion ſhall direct us. We muſt learn the ſeaſonable practice of *Solomons* rule,

Eccleſ.

A *Eccleſ.* iii. 7. *There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak.* Firſt, for ſilence, the Young man's time; then to ſpeak, the Aged and experienced: firſt, for ſilence, to deliberate; then after to ſpeak. Hence *David*, Pſal. cxli. 3. prayes for a door to his lips, and a watch to keep that door. The door muſt not ſtand alwayes open; watch who paſſes out. Thus *Solomon* commends a ſeaſonable word: *They are like Apples of Gold, with Pictures of Silver.* An unſeaſonable Truth may be as pernicious as an intended Lie.

4. A fourth Condition is: Truth muſt be uttered in charity, and love, and with intendment of good to our Brother. *Follow the truth*
B *in love*, Epheſ. iv. 10. *Love in the Truth*, ſaith *John*. Neither truth without love, nor love without truth. As charity rejoyceth in the truth, ſo truth ſhould rejoyce in charity. A man may ſpeak the truth maliciouſly, to do miſchief by it. There may be *veritas homicida*. As *Doeg*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9. makes a true, but yet a malicious Relation of *David*'s intercourſe with *Abiathar*. He murthered the Prieſts with a malicious truth. *His tongue was a ſharp raſour.* So the *Ziphims* reported truely, but yet maliciouſly of *David*. In ſpeaking, ſeek the good, not the hurt of our Brethren. The falſe Apoſtles preach'd the Truth of ill-will, *Phil.* i. 15.

C *Vidimus virtutem oppoſitam*, Truth. The nature of the Sin of Lying will further appear.

(2.) By conſidering it in its own Nature. And here we will briefly make theſe three Enquiries:

1. What is a Lie, and how many kindes of it?

2. Seeing the Wiſe-man prayes againſt Lies in general; whether all ſorts of Lies be unlawful?

3. What aggravations there be, that make them more ſinful?

1. What is a Lie, and how many kindes of it?

[1.] What is a Lie? What is the nature and being of a Lie? Con-
D ceive the nature of it briefly in this ſhort expreſſion: *A Lie is a voluntary, and wilful telling of an untruth, with a purpoſe to deceive.* So that three things are required to the nature of a Lie.

1. There muſt be an Untruth and Falſneſs in the thing.

2. This Untruth muſt be known to be ſo, he muſt be conſcious to himſelf, that it is falſe.

3. He muſt have an intent and purpoſe to utter this falſhood with a deſire to deceive another by it, and to bring him into errour.

So then from hence three ſorts of Speeches are freed from
E this Sin.

1. Dark Speeches, that conceal ſome Truth: for a man is not alwayes to expreſs all he knows, except he be lawfully demanded. Thus *Samuel* concealed his anointing of *David*.

2. Figurative Speeches, and Parabolical; as to ſay, a Drunkard is a Swine. Theſe have truth in them by way of repreſentation and ſimilitude.

Serm. II.

3. Hyperbolical, exceſſive Speeches are no Lies: as *Joh.* xxi. 25. *The world cannot contain the Books that ſhall be written*; it implies no falſhood, but exceeding greatneſs of quantity. A

[2.] *Quotuplex mendacium?* How many kinde of Lies are there? Saint *Auguſtine* makes eight ſorts: but all may be reduced to three:

1. Is *Jocoſum*, the ſporting Lie.
2. Is *Officioſum*, the helpful Lie.
3. Is *Pernicioſum*, the Pernicious and hurting Lie.

1. There is a Lie intended to make ſport with, and for delight; when men will tell untruths to make men merry, and to occaſion delight in thoſe that hear them. *Hoſea* complains of this Sin, *Chap.* vii. 3. *They make the King glad with their wickedneſs, and the Princes with their lies*; frame Fictions, and lead them into ridiculous credulity; ſo to diſport others, and themſelves. B

2. There is a Lie intended to help others, to do a man a good turn, and to help him at a pinch. Thus the *Egyptian* Midwives; thus *Rahab*; ſo the old Prophet told a Lie, to perſwade the Man of God to go back to dinner with him.

3. And worſt of all is the pernicious, miſchievous, hurtfull Lie, when we ſeek the hurt of another by our Lie. Thus *Joſeph*'s Miſtreſs told a Lie to impriſon *Joſeph*: Thus they charged Chriſt, that he forbad paying of Tribute, that they might ſlay him. That's the firſt Enquiry. C

2. Whether all theſe ſorts of Lies be ſinful? *Plato* ſaid, That "In "affairs of State, Magiſtrates might lie to advantage the Common-"wealth. Among Chriſtians, the *Priſcillianiſts* in Spain, in St. *Auguſtine*'s Time, taught, *It was lawfull to lie for the helping of a good cauſe, and for the propagating of the Goſpel, and for the advantage of Religion.* A wicked and peſtilent Sect.

[1.] No Lie is lawful:

1. A Lie is contrary to God himſelf. He is the God of Truth. Hence he is ſaid, not only to forbid a Lie, but to hate a Lie. A Lie, 'tis an abomination. Now we abominate that which is contrary to our Nature; *Prov.* vi. 16. *A lying tongue* is one of the ſeven things that are abominable to God. *Prov.* xii. 22. *Lying lips are abomination to the Lord*; not only offenſive, or odious, but abominable. His ſoul loaths them. A Lie draws its Pedigree from the Devil. *John* viii. 44. *He is a Liar, and the Father of it.* D

2. A Lie is oppoſite to that Truth in which we were created. The vertue and grace of Truth is part of the Image of God, in which we were created, *Epheſ.* iv. 22. And, on the contrary, lying is a part of the Devil's Image; He is *a liar from the beginning*. Other ſins make us like Beaſts, this of lying makes us like Devils. E

3. 'Tis oppoſite to the very nature and inſtitution of Speech. Our Tongue is our glory, and beſtowed upon us by God, as an excellent inſtrument to expreſs what the minde conceives, and to diſcover it to others.

4. 'Tis

4. 'Tis oppoſite to that Communion and Society, that we ought to maintain; it diſſolves that mutual truſt, that we ſhould have with one another. *Dividing of Languages* turns all into Confuſion, a *Babel*. So that *nullum mendacium licitum*. Yea, ſo unlawful, that,

[2.] Not the moſt Excuſable Lie is allowable. There is no pretence whatſoever can make it warrantable; no, not the officious, or helpful Lie.

If not in theſe three Exigencies, then not at all.

1. *Exigent:* Not to ſave mine own, or another man's Life muſt I lie. *Nec prodam, nec mentiar*; ſaid *Firmus*. If I cannot eſcape, but by Lying, then God calls me to Dying.

2. *Exigent:* Not to ſave a Man's Soul. A Lie in this caſe is not warrantable. *Ad ſempiternam ſalutem nullus adducendus eſt, opitulante mendacio:* Aug.

3. *Exigent:* Not for God's Glory: We muſt not tell a Lie, to the advantage of glorifying God. *Job* xiii. 7, 8. *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* We muſt not be falſe-witneſſes of God, to ſay, *He raiſed Chriſt*, if he did not. We muſt not make *God's Glory abound by our lie*, Rom. iii. 7. As a man muſt not commit Murder, or Adultery for any good end, ſo nor lie. *Nullo pacto, nullo fine, nullâ diſpenſatione poteſt licitè mendacium dici.* That's the ſecond Enquiry. The laſt is,

3. What Aggravations make a Lie the more ſinful?

1. A Lie is more notoriouſly ſinful in regard of the Matter of it. This may aggravate it, if it be in weighty matters, and of great conſequence. As to lie in matters of Religion, to teach Lies in matters of Faith, to love and believe Lies. Errours of Charity may be excuſeable, but Errours in Faith are damnable. So in weighty affairs amongſt men, againſt the Life of a man; that heightens the Lie.

2. A Lie is aggravated, if it be done out of Delight, and a Love to Lies. *Pſal.* iv. 3. *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* Pſal. lviii. 3. *The wicked go aſtray, as ſoon as they are born, ſpeaking lies.* A cuſtomary Habit of Lies, that's hateful.

3. It aggravates this ſin, if it comes out of Deliberation; when we come to a forging, and weaving, and framing, and contriving of Lies, to forecaſt, and plot them, when a lying ſpirit ſits upon our lips, when we conceive, and travel with Lies. Danger, Fear, Paſſion, may alleviate; but Deliberation aggravates.

4. The Place, and Condition of the Perſon, that aggravates:

1. For a Chriſtian to lie, this is horrible. *Ye are members one of another*, ſaith the Apoſtle; and therefore ought not. What a ſhame was it for *Abraham*, that *Pharaoh* an Heathen, ſhould take him with Untruth? *Gen.* xii.

2. For men of Authority, and worth. Oh! it ill becomes them to be given to Lying. They ſhould ſpeak the Truth freely, conſtantly. The Wiſe man tells us, three things are abominable; *a poor man, proud; an old man, doting; a rich man, a liar.* Theſe are

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are unnatural, not having ordinary temptations. A rich man, what needs he lie? Ψεύδεται, δελοπρεπῶς; 'Tis a base, brute quality to be given to lyes, and so not beseeming a man of greatness. A

We have seen the Evil he prayes against: Now follows,

Secondly, The Prayer he makes against it. *Remove far from me.* He sues for a gracious freedom from these evils.

For the purpose and intendment of this Prayer (as Expositours conceive) it hath a double aspect, it looks two wayes.

I. It looks backwards to the vanities and sins of his former life. We must understand this Prayer to be the Petition, not of an innocent, but of a penitent man; of one that hath been already over-taken with these sins: and then 'tis a suit for Remission; "*Remove far* "*from me* those sins that I have committed, charge them not upon "me, acquit me from all my former vanities; and so he begs the "grace of Justification. B

II. It looks forwards, for the time to come; "I have been a "sinner, and if thou keep me not, I shall again fall into sin; Oh! "prevent me by thy grace, let no vanity of sin have dominion over "me. So 'tis a suit for Sanctification.

1. Those sins I have committed, *Remove them far from me*; that's the grace of Subvention. C

2. Preserve me for hereafter, that I sin not against thee, *Remove them far from me*; that's the grace of Prevention.

1. This Prayer respects *peccata præterita*, *Remove them* by remission; acquit and free me from them. And then the strength, and force of this Prayer, as it respects former sins already committed, will appear by these particular directions, or supposals.

(1.) *Remove my sins far from me.* The first supposal is; "That "Sin, after 'tis committed, lies near, and close to us, continues, and "abides upon us, haunts, and pursues, and dogs us; nay, sits close, and "oppresses the soul of a Sinner, like an heavy burthen. 'Tis a Maxim D in Divinity, *Peccatum transit actu, manet reatu.* Indeed, the act, and pleasure of sinning, 'tis transitory, and so most men judge of it; when 'tis committed, 'tis gone and over. True; but though the act be transient, yet the guilt and demerit, the stain and corruption, the accusing and condemning power of it, that abides, and continues, and rests still upon us; that's lasting and permanent. There is a kinde of eternity in every sin in this sense: which Divines give as a just reason, why Damnation should be eternal.

Carnal Reason enquires, and questions God's Justice; *Why doth God punish a sudden, short, momentany sin with everlasting pains?* They E are answered, *It is just with God so to do:*

1. Because 'tis *contra Deum infinitum*; against an Infinite Majesty.

2. Because the guilt and stain of Sin, of its own nature, and unpardoned, endures eternally upon the soul. Alas! we think our sins are past, and over, when we have committed them. As the Harlot,

A Harlot, *Prov.* xxx. 20. *she eats, and wipes her mouth,* and thinks all is well again. No, God deſcribes the continuing abode of Sin in that Speech to *Cain*, Gen. iv. 7. *Sin lies at the door.* It will not be ſhaken off, or diſmiſſed. We think to diſmiſs our ſins, as *Amnon* did *Tamar*; when he had ſatisfied his luſt, *Then ariſe, be gone, put her out of doors*, 2 Sam. xiii. 15, 17. No, 'tis not ſo diſcharged, it reſts then, it *lies at the door.* Thus *Job* apprehends the nature of his ſins, *Job* xiv. 17. *My tranſgreſſions are ſealed up in a Bag, and thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity*; a juſt account and tale of them is kept. Thus *David* acknowledges the continuance of his ſins, *Pſal.* li. 3.
B *My ſin is ever before me*, as a Ghoſt, or Fiend, continually haunting him. So *Jeremy*, Chap. xvii. 1. he deſcribes the laſting continuance of Sin: *The ſin of Judah is written with a pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond*; ὐ μόνον γεγραῖα, ἀλλὰ γλυφαῖα, not onely written, but engraven, that no hand can deface it. Slight not the commiſſion of any ſin, it periſhes not with the acting. The leaſt vanity hath a perpetuity, nay eternity of guilt. That's the firſt.

(2.) *Remove far from me.* A ſecond Suppoſal is, "That God only "can remove, and ſeparate our ſins from us. 'Tis his peculiar Prero-
C gative to free, and diſcharge us from the ſins we have committed. *Eſai.* xliii. 25. *I, even I am he, that blots out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.* This God puts amongſt his glorious Titles, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6. *The* LORD, *the* LORD, *ſtrong, merciful and gracious, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion, and ſin.* The Prophet *Micah* challenges all the gods of the Heathen, in this power of pardoning, and removing ſin: *Chap.* vii. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity?*

1. Remiſſion and pardon of ſin is proper to him, that is the maker, and eſtabliſher of the Law. Inferiour Magiſtrates judg according unto Law, the Supreme only can pardon, and forgive. *Jam.*
D iv. 12, *There is one Law-giver, that is able to ſave, and to deſtroy.*

2. He alone can pardon, becauſe he alone properly is the party wronged. Sin, as ſin, is a treſpaſs only againſt God. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned*, ſaid *David*, Pſal. li. 4.

3. Pardon of ſin, 'tis an act of Supremacy, nay, Omnipotency, and ſo peculiar to God. *'Tis God that juſtifies*, Rom. viii. 33. *'Tis as great a work to juſtifie a ſinner, as to create a World*: Aug. The burthen of ſin we cannot ſhake off our ſelves, nor can any creature eaſe us of it; we muſt let that alone for ever. God himſelf muſt diſcharge our ſins, or we can never be freed from them.

E (3.) *Remove far from.* A third Truth implied is, "When God "pardons ſins, He makes a full ſeparation, and removal of them: *He removes them far from us.* And the large diſtance that God ſets betwixt us and our ſins, when he removes them from us, will appear in theſe two removals, and ſeparations, he makes of them.

1. *Removet à perſona*; He makes a full remove of them from our perſons.

2. *Removet*

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2. *Removet à conſcientia*; He makes a full remove of them from our Conſciences, disburthens them of them. A

1. *Removet à perſona.* He fully frees, and diſcharges our perſons, that our ſins cannot lay hold upon us. The Scripture expreſſes the compleatneſs of God's pardoning us. *Pſal.* ciii. 12. *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt; ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us.* A large diſtance. We may as ſoon bring thoſe two points of heaven together, as bring upon us our ſins, when God hath removed them. Thus *Micah*, Chap. vii. 19. *He will ſubdue our iniquities, and will caſt our ſins into the depth of the Sea.* Be they never ſo many, never ſo great, the Sea can ſwallow them up; and if once ſunk into the depth, they are paſt finding again. As God ſpake of the *Egyptians*, *The Egyptians, whom you ſee to day, you ſhall ſee no more:* As they all were drowned in the depth of the Sea; ſo, in *Baptiſm*, all our ſins are drown'd. This pardoning of ſin is called a *forgetting*; Jer. xxxi. 34. *I will forgive their iniquity, I will remember their ſin no more.* 'Tis called *a blotting out, I am he, that blots out thine iniquities*, Eſai. xliii. 15. 'Tis defaced, and cancelled; 'Tis called a *burying of ſin. Our ſins are buryed with him in Baptiſm.* This was repreſented by the Scape-goat, *Levit.* xvi. *They confeſſed all their ſins upon the head of the Scape-goat, and ſent him into the Wilderneſs, the land of forgetfulneſs.* This *Jeremy* promiſes, *Chap.* l. 20. *In that time the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found; for I will pardon them.* B C

In particular, this full removal of our ſins from our perſons, ſtands in theſe four ſeveral degrees of removal.

1. 'Tis an Abſolute removal and pardon; not depending upon after-conditions. Indeed he requires conditions before pardon; as Repentance, and Faith: but then he abſolutely acquits, and diſcharges us. Otherwiſe it were not a Remiſſion, but a Suſpenſion of our ſins. No; God, when he pardons ſin, accounts it, as if it had never been, and us, as good as innocent. D

2. 'Tis an Univerſal pardon, and that removes ſin far from us. He forgives not ſome ſins, retains others; cancels not part of the debts, keeps the reſt upon account; bids us not write fifty, or fourſcore, in ſtead of an hundred; makes not an abatement only, compounds our debts for a ſmall ſum, but aboliſhes all.

3. 'Tis a perfect pardon, and that removes ſin far from us. He forgives not only the ſin, but the puniſhment; not only the eternal puniſhment, but the temporary, reſerves nothing upon the ſcore.

4. 'Tis a final and irrevocable pardon, and that removes ſin far from us. Once pardoned, and alwayes pardoned: once acquitted, and never again reckoned with. As he gives, ſo he forgives freely; upbraids no man with ſins once pardoned. 'Tis a true determination of the Schools, *Peccata remiſſa nunquam redeunt. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance.* He doth not repent that ever he pardoned us. 'Tis ſaid indeed, *He repented that he* E

made

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A *made man*; but never, that he redeemed, or pardoned, or juſtified him. No; but he ſaith, as *Iſaac* of *Jacob*, *I have bleſſed him, and he ſhall be bleſſed.* 'Twere againſt Juſtice, to puniſh that ſin, for which he hath accepted a full ſatisfaction in Chriſt's death. Hear Saint *Auguſtine* upon thoſe words of the *Pſalm* ciii. 12. *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our ſins from us. Peccata ſunt in occaſu.* When God pardons, our ſins diſappear, and ſet in the Weſt; *Gratia in Oriente*, and Mercy and Grace, that's in the Eaſt, riſen upon us. But not as 'tis in the Heavens; there *pars cæli, quæ ſurgit, rurſus in occaſum vergit; non ſic gratia, quæ nobis oritur; peccata in æternum occidunt, gratia in æternum manet.* The Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall never ſet upon thee.

2. *Removet à conſcientia.* That's a ſecond Diſtance of this removal; he takes the burthen of our ſins off our Conſciences, appeaſes, and pacifies them. Sin, of it ſelf, will lie heavy upon the Conſcience. *David* felt as much, when he ſaid, *Pſal.* xxxviii. 4. *Mine iniquities are as an heavy burthen, they are too heavy for me to bear.* And Chriſt calls Sinners, *Matth.* xi. 28. *heavy-laden.* The burthen of ſin, when God charges it upon the Conſcience, is unſupportable. Now, when God pardons ſin, he removes this burthen, eaſes, and refreſhes the Con-
C ſcience. Every ſin contracts a bond of guiltineſs; now when God cancels the main Bond, and Hand-writing, he cancels alſo the Counterpane, that is regiſtred, and kept upon Record in our Conſciences, takes it off the File. And this he doth two wayes.

1. *Ingenerando pœnitentiam*; by inſpiring into the Soul the grace of Repentance. That empties the conſcience of all clogging ſins. 'Tis the vomit of the ſoul. While ſin lies unrepented, it makes us heart-ſick; when God moves us to repentance, then the Conſcience is lightened.

2. *Obſignando pacem*, by ſettling peace and tranquillity in
D us. *Rom.* v. 1. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God.* He takes from us the ſpirit of fear, endues us with the ſpirit of love, and of a ſound minde. So that a Chriſtian may now remember his ſins without horrour. Indeed for deteſtation, he never gives it over; but for horrour and perplexity, he is freed from that. *Now*, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*, *I can ſee my ſins without horrour.* God chains up Satan, ſets us out of his reach, directs words of comfort to us, ſeals up our pardon.

Here is another conſtruction of this petition:

E II. This prayer reſpects *peccata futura. Remove them far from me*, not only by Remiſſion, but by a gracious Prevention. The former anſwers to *Forgive us our treſpaſſes*; the latter to *Lead us not into temptation.* And then the ſtrength, and full extent of this prayer, will appear in theſe degrees of diſtance and ſeparation.

1. *Remove far from me*; that is, "Free me from the dominion of "them; ſuffer no ſinful vanity to have dominion over me. When any luſt hath got the full ſway in a man's heart, that it bids him *go, and he*

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he goes; *come, and he comes*; *do this, and he doeth it*: this a Saint prayes againſt, *O! keep me from preſumptuous ſins*; *Let not ſin reign in my mortal body*, let it not Lord it, and exerciſe authority over me.

2. *Remove far from me*; that is, "Keep me from the ſurreption "of theſe evils, and from the aſſaults and ſurprizals they may make "upon me. St. *Paul* was free from the dominion of ſin, but not from the vexation of it: *I finde another law in my Members: the evil I would not, that do I. Libera me à neceſſitatibus, Domine*: A good Chriſtian prayes not only againſt the Sovereignty, but againſt the infirmities of ſin: Let not only the dominion of ſin not govern me, but let not the ſolicitations of ſin prevail againſt me.

3. *Remove far from me*; that is, "Free me *à reliquiis peccati*. True piety prayes againſt the remainders of ſinful corruption, thoſe propenſities, and inclinations to evil; deſires not only to ſubdue them, but to deſtroy them. Proneneſs to evil, backwardneſs to good, the Saints groan under them; with *Saul*, they are not content to ſubdue theſe *Gibeonites*, but to deſtroy them.

4. *Remove far from me*; that is, "Keep me from all occaſions of "ſin; ſet me not in ſlippery places, keep me out of the walk of my "ſin. He that would be free from any ſin, ſhuns all occaſions. *Prov.* iv. 15. *Avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it.* He, that is carefull to avoid occaſions, ſtarves his ſin. *Sapè fruſtra ſurgendo, diſcit non ſurgere*. They are rare men, that can live amidſt occaſions, and yet not fall. *Lot* in *Sodom*, *Joſeph* with his enticing Miſtreſs. *Nemo diu tutus, periculo proximus*. And *quædam licita vitanda propter vicinitatem illiciti*: Aug. And *qui amat periculum, peribit in eo*.

5. *Remove far from me*: that is, "Reſtrain all temptations; chain "up Satan, and the deceivable luſts. *Lead me not into temptation*, "ſuffer not Satan to ſtand at my right hand.

6. There is one diſtance more, and that's implyed in that word of the Text, *Tantiſper dum vivo*: *Untill I die*. How long prayes he againſt *vanity and lies?* 'tis whileſt he lives. That ſets the date of his Prayer. Danger of ſin is not fully avoided whileſt we live: we are not free from inward corruption, or outward temptation. Neither are we to forbear ſin for a time; but, as long as life laſts, never to return to it again.

Put all together then, and we ſhall finde here three removals of ſin.

1. Our Juſtification, that removes from us the condemning power of ſin.

2. Our Sanctification, that removes from us the domineering power of ſin.

3. Our Death, that will free us from the very being of it.

THE

THE THIRD SERMON ON PROV. XXX. 8.

Give me neither poverty, nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me.

WE have seen that part of this Holy man's Prayer that respects his soul and spiritual Estate; *Remove far from me vanity and lies.* And having provided for that, in the second place he takes care for his body and temporal condition, and the welfare of it, prays for a competency and necessary provision for this present life. First he prays for a freedom from Sin, then for a freedom from worldly cares and distractions. *Sancta methodus.*

Now this Prayer concerning his worldly Estate is framed and commended in a double Expression.

First, Here is *Deprecatio.*

Secondly, Here is *Petitio.*

First, A Deprecation, a Prayer to be freed from two Extremities.

First, Is a state of distress and want, and poverty.

Secondly, Is a state of surcharge and superfluity of Riches.

He prays against over-little, and over-much; not to be pinched with poverty, nor to surfeit with too much prosperity. That's the Deprecation. Then comes in,

Secondly, A Petition, that's for a competency, a convenient portion of temporal blessings; *Feed me with food convenient for me.*

First, Here is his Deprecation, his Prayer against *poverty* and *riches.* And in it two things considerable;

First, *Quòd deprecatur*; that he doth make a Prayer against both these estates, beggary and riches; that makes it observable.

Secondly, *Fundamentum Deprecationis*, the grounds of this Prayer, that make it warrantable.

First, *Quòd deprecatur*, that is observable. This Holy man prayes

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against these two estates of life, want and riches. There is something, it seems, in both of them, which a Christian would shun; neither of them so fully desirable, that this Holy man durst rush upon them at all adventures. So then, the bent of this Prayer detects, and discovers to us a double error; A

I. An Error on the right hand, that's an error of superstition.

II. An Error on the left hand, that's the worldlings false opinion.

The first is an Erroneous esteem that some have of poverty.

The second an erroneous esteem, that the men of this world have of plenty and riches.

I. Doth he pray against poverty? Then poverty and beggary, is no state of perfection. The Church of *Rome* hypocritically and superstitiously commend the Vow and Estate of voluntary poverty, as an high pitch of piety, as that which commends their Monks and begging Fryers (then which, since the Caterpillars and Locusts of *Egypt*, the world never knew a more noysom swarm of Vermine) to God's high acceptation. For those evil beasts and slow bellies, under a pretense of poverty, to renounce personal riches and possessions, and so to live upon the labours and charity of others, 'tis in their esteem an high piece of perfection. Nay, verily, beggary, it is not B

1. In it self to be wished, or desired.

2. Much less to be voluntarily and wilfully incurred.

3. Least of all to be the matter of a Vow and solemn resolution. C

1. Beggary in it self is not to be wished. This Holy man prayes against it. Of it self, it hath no place among the blessings of God:

(1.) For its inlet and original; it grows out of a cursed soil, 'twas the fruit of our first Sin. *Adam* created in plenty, himself outran his means, cast himself and his posterity into the necessity of poverty. As no pain, so no want, but by Sin.

(2.) In it self God still reckons it as *quid pœnale*. 'Tis amongst the plagues and punishments of sin. We find it comes with a menace and threatning in the Scriptures. D

[1.] 'Tis threatned to wickedness in general, *Psal.* cix. 10. *Let his children be continually vagabonds and beg, let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.* That's the doom of a wicked man.

[2.] 'Tis threatned to some special sins.

1. To Unthankfulness for riches and plenty, *Deut.* xxviii. 47, 48. *Because thou servedst not the* LORD *thy God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies, which the* LORD *shall send against thee in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.* E

2. To Unmercifulness and Cruelty to the poor, *Prov.* xxii. 16. *He that oppresseth the poor to encrease riches, shall surely come to poverty.* He that pities not poverty in others, shall feel it in himself.

3. To Idleness, *Prov.* x. 4. *He shall become poor that deals with a slack hand.* Prov. vi. 11. *Want shall come upon the sluggard like an armed man.*

4. To

A 4. To Drunkenneſs, and Gluttony, and Exceſs, Prov. xxiii. 21. *The Drunkard and the Glutton ſhall come to poverty.*

5. To Company-keeping, *Prov.* xxviii. *He that follows after vain perſons, ſhall have poverty enough.*

6. To Adultery, *Job* xxxi 12. *It will root out all a man's encreaſe.* Prov. vi. 26. *Bring him to a morſel of bread.* Prov. xxix. 3. *Spend his ſubſtance.*

7. To Contempt of admonitions and inſtructions, *Prov.* xiii. 18. *Poverty ſhall be to him that refuſes inſtruction.* 'Tis penal in it ſelf, ſo not to be deſired.

B 2. Much leſs is it voluntarily and wilfully to be choſen and incurred. Poverty 'tis as War, *Tunc bonum, quando neceſſarium.* When God ſends it, and calls us to it; not when we haſten and procure it. A Chriſtian muſt be voluntarily poor by a willingneſs of ſubmiſſion and acceptation; not by a willingneſs of procurement and ſelf-ſeeking of it. Thus *David* was willing to renounce his Kingdom; *Here I am, if the* LORD *ſay, I have no delight in thee, let him do to me as ſeems good to him,* 2 Sam. xv. 26. Suffer Poverty, as we ſuffer Affliction, not to run into it: but, if it befal us, chearfully to undergo it; as we ſuffer perſecution, when God ſends it, not to provoke it our ſelves; as a Chriſtian ſuffers death willingly, C not haſtening it, but when it comes, willingly to embrace it.

3. It muſt leaſt of all be the matter of a Vow, to binde our ſelves to God to live in Beggary. Whatſoever is the matter of a lawful Vow muſt be either *officium pietatis*, in it ſelf an act of holineſs; Beggary is not; Poverty nor riches do not commend us to God, the Kingdom of heaven ſtands not in riches nor poverty: Or it muſt be *adminiculum pietatis*, as an help & furtherance to Piety. But the diſtractions of Beggary, they hinder; and the temptations of Beggary they quench and choak Piety, they do not advance it. Briefly, theſe Vows of Beggary, they are,

1. *Superſtitioſa*, without warrant.

D 2. *Periculoſa*, beſet with temptations.

3. *Injurioſa*, reproachful to God, *who gives us all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. vi. 17.

4. *Præſumptuoſa*, and blaſphemous pretending merit and ſupererogation.

That's the firſt Error, *Poverty is no ſtate of perfection.*

We have ſeen the firſt part of this Deprecation; *Agur* prayes againſt poverty. And herein, I ſuppoſe, there will be no great need to perſwade you to joyn with him. We are ready every one of us to ſay Amen to this Prayer; LORD, *keep me from poverty:* But,

E II. Doth he not pray againſt Riches too? Yes; that's another prayer, that *Agur* makes and prefers to God, with as much earneſtneſs and devotion, as that againſt Poverty. And this prayer croſſes the grand error of worldly-mindedneſs, that judges riches and abundance an happy condition. 'Tis the ſum of every man's wiſh; and every one can ſay, *LORD, keep me from want*; but who is afraid of riches? who prayes againſt abundance? A natural man counts this Prayer a meer

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paradox. To be ſhie of the world, to ſuſpect ſome danger in plenty, it cannot ſink into a worldling's heart. A

Well, this Text tell us, riches have no excellency, but they may be prayed againſt. So far forth as they are good, ſo they fall under the compaſs of our prayers; as their goodneſs fades, ſo muſt our prayers for them abate; and our prayers againſt them then are good and warrantable.

Take we notice then of the ſhortneſs and unſufficiency of the goodneſs that is in riches, in theſe three degrees;

1. *Riches* are not *ſummum bonum*, not the chief, main good.

2. They are not *abſolutè bona*, not abſolute good in their nature and condition. B

3. They are not alwayes and to every man *bonum utile*, not inſtrumentally good.

1. *Riches* are not *ſummum bonum*, not the chief, main good. Indeed a worldly man judges them to be the very ſum and ſubſtance, the marrow and quinteſſence of happineſs. He knows no other heaven then full barns and bags. The wedg of gold is his God. The having of it makes him happy, the loſs of it makes him miſerable. Indeed, if it were ſo, it were not poſſible we ſhould pray againſt it. Natutally, and neceſſarily the heart deſires bleſſedneſs; it cannot reject it, or pray againſt it. No, *riches* are not *ſummum bonum*, for three reaſons, or defects, that make them fall ſhort of the chief good. C

1. *Summum bonum perficit animam.* That which is the chiefeſt good of man, muſt have its ſeat in the chiefeſt part of man; it muſt perfect, and enoble, and make happy the ſoul of man. As a Crown the enſign of royal Sovereignty, 'tis ſet upon the head, the nobleſt member: So Happineſs, which is the crown of man, it muſt be the beauty and perfection of the ſoul and ſpirit, the only ſeat of man's excellency. Bleſſedneſs is principally, properly in the ſoul. Now riches, they have no ability to perfect that, they add no excellency to the ſpiritual part. *Man may be in honour*, and yet *without underſtanding, is like the Beaſts that periſh*, Pſal. xlix. 20. D

2. *Summum bonum ſatiat appetitum.* It gives full content and ſatisfaction to the deſire, repleniſhes the ſoul, gives it perfect contentment. He that enjoys the chief good, ſaith, *I have enough, my deſires are filled up*; he ſolaces his ſoul, as *David* did, *Pſal.* xvi. 6. *I am well-pleaſed, my portion is full, I have a goodly heritage.* He that hath the chief good, in which happineſs conſiſts, craves no more; all the corners of his heart are filled, his *ſoul is repleniſhed as with marrow and fatneſs.* Now riches fail in this excellency, they do not quiet the deſires of him that hath them; but ſtill he is craving. The rich man's heart is like the Horſe-leach, ſtill crying, *Give, give.* True Happineſs quenches our thirſt; he that taſts of it, *ſhall never thirſt again.* But riches are like briniſh Water, *non ſatiat, ſed irritat appetitum. He enlarges his deſire as Hell*, Hab. ii. 5. and is *as death, and cannot be ſatisfied*; he is *as one that tranſgreſſes by Wine.* E

3. *Sum-*

A 3. *Summum bonum immobilitat ſtatum.* Felicity alwayes breeds ſecurity and ſetledneſs in that ſtate. It puts him that enjoys it, in a fixed, conſtant, immutable condition. Once an happy man, and alwayes happy. He is not happy that may be miſerable, may loſe his happineſs. *A bleſſed man is not afraid of any evil tidings, his heart is fixed.* The Philoſopher compares an happy man to a Square, Cube, or Die, caſt it which way you will, it lies even and ſquare. Chance or Fortune hath no power over an happy man. He is inſeparably united to his chief good. Now riches fail in this property of happineſs. A rich man's eſtate is a mutable, changeable condition. *Jam.* i. 10,
B 11. *The rich man as the Flower of the graſs, ſhall paſs away; for the Sun is no ſooner riſen with a burning heat, but it withers the graſs, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the faſhion of it periſhes.* Though no foot tread on it, no hand pluck it, of it ſelf it fades. *Riches make themſelves wings, they flee away as an Eagle,* Prov. xxiii. 5.

2. *Riches,* they are not *abſolutè bona,* abſolutely, and every way good. If they were, then not to be prayed againſt. But riches are not ſo;

1. That which is in it ſelf is abſolutely good, that certainly makes the owner, him that poſſeſſes it, good too. It gives an excellency and addition of good to him, that is endued with it. He is better with it,
C and worſe without it. Thus Virtue, and Piety, and Grace, it makes a man the better man. *The righteous is* better *then his neighbour, more excellent,* Prov. xii. 26. *He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghoſt, and Faith;* 'tis ſpoken of *Barnabas, Acts* xi. 24. Theſe add goodneſs to the poſſeſſours of them. But riches have no ſuch quality. One may be a rich man, but not a better man for having them. In 1 *Sam.* xxv. there is *Nabal* a rich, but yet a wicked man. *Luke* xii. 20. he may be a rich man, and yet a fooliſh man. *Luke* vi. 24. he may be rich, and yet a curſed man; *Wo unto you that are rich,* Luke xvi. 23. he may be a rich man, and yet a damned man; *The rich man*
D *was in Hell-torments.*

2. That which is abſolutely good, is ſo good, that it cannot be abuſed; 'tis alwayes good in the uſe, and employment of it. Thus Virtue and Grace is abſolutely good, a man cannot abuſe it. The actions and employments of Virtue are alwayes good, the practice and exerciſe of them is alwayes commendable. *Virtute nemo malè utitur,* ſaith the Philoſopher. But riches have no ſuch worth or excellency in them; they may be abuſed, and ſinfully employed: as a weapon may be employed to commit murther, as well as to defend our lives, or to fight for our King and Countrey. Pride, and Luxury,
E and Oppreſſion can abuſe riches, as well as Juſtice and Charity can lawfully manage them. As they ſay of *Mercury,* he is good in a good Conjunction, and bad in a bad. *Eccleſ.* v. 13. *I have ſeen riches kept for the owners thereof to their own hurt. Qui majores terras poſſident, minores cenſus ſolvunt,* Pariſ.

3. Theſe things that are abſolutely good, are abſolute pledges of God's love, and by God beſtowed upon his beſt beloved. They are the

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the *bleſsings of his right hand*, and belong to thoſe that ſhall ſtand at his right hand. But *riches* and *honours are in his left hand*, ſaith *Solomon*. *He fills the bellies of wicked men with his treaſure*. They are not *bona throni*, but *bona ſcabelli*. *No man can know love or hatred by them*; or ſay, *God gives me riches, therefore he loves me*: but of *Grace* we may ſay, *God gives me Faith and Charity, and therefore he loves me*. A

3. *Riches* are not always inſtrumentally good. They are *bona non unde ſis bonus, ſed unde facias bonum*, Aug. Take riches at the beſt, and they have but the goodneſs of an inſtrument to do ſome good by them; an inferiour, ſubordinate, ſerviceable goodneſs, that's the loweſt degree of goodneſs that can be. Yet oft-times riches fail in this kind alſo; not only by way of abuſe, but they are often-times in themſelves unſerviceable, and uſeleſs for much good: Indeed the worldling thinks wealth a παγκαλον, an univerſal inſtrument; an engine to work wonders with. *Eccleſ.* x. 19. *Money anſwers all things*. No ſuch matter. B

1. It's of no avail for heaven. *Zeph.* i. 8. *Neither their Silver, nor their Gold ſhall be able to deliver them in the day of the* LORD's *wrath*. Thus *Solomon* compares it, *Eccleſ.* vii. 12. *Wiſdom is a defence, and Money is a defence; but the excellency of Knowledge is, that Wiſdom gives life to them that have it*; the life of Grace and Glory: ſo cannot riches, *Job* xxxvi. 19. *Will he eſteem thy riches? Can they ranſom thee?* C

2. 'Tis not available for many Temporal comforts. It enables not a man to perform many actions. *Prov.* xxii. 1. *A good name is better then riches*; that makes a man able to do more good. Riches cannot preſerve life, nor procure health, nor eaſe pain, nor mitigate ſorrow. Indeed *godlineſs is profitable for all things*.

That's the firſt, *Quòd deprecatur*. Now follows,

Secondly, *Fundamentum Deprecationis*. Let's enquire into the grounds of this Prayer, that make it warrantable. What is it, that makes him to deprecate poverty and riches? That we may the better conceive of this, D

1. Let us remove thoſe falſe grounds, that are, or may be ſuppoſed for this Prayer;

1. The firſt falſe ground of this prayer is of them that conceive it to ariſe *ex ſpiritu veteris Teſtamenti*. It was a prayer agreeable to the ſtate of the Old Teſtament. That, they ſay, was a ſtate of weakneſs and imperfection. They had no ſuch enablements of grace, to undergo voluntary poverty, or to manage great riches in an holy manner. Nay, verily, that is not the reaſon. For though under the Old Teſtament Grace was not ſo diffuſed, yet we finde as eminent Saints as under the New. *Abraham*'s faith, *Job*'s patience, the Goſpel propounds theſe as moſt rranſcendent examples of piety. The Spirit in the Old Teſtament enabled *Abraham* to be rich holily; and *Job* to ſuffer extreme poverty, patiently, comfortably. E

2. A ſecond falſe ground of this prayer is, that *inopia* is *maledicta*; that poverty by God is a prohibited, nay a curſed condition. Indeed of

A of it's own nature 'tis penal, but yet the condition of it is alterable by grace. Labour and pains had a curſed original; but now commanded, and ſweetned, and bleſſed by grace.

I; but the Scripture forbids Beggary.

(1.) 'Tis a Promiſe, not a Prohibition; *He will bleſs them*, and keep them from *poverty*.

(2.) If a prohibition:

[1.] 'Tis *in cauſis*; not to do that which may bring beggary, as being idle and waſtful.

[2.] 'Tis *in praxi*, not to accuſtome our ſelves, not to make it a B trade of life, to live by begging.

[3.] 'Tis *in remedio*, enjoyning the rich to relieve and ſupport them, to provide againſt the neceſſity and ſhame of begging. But otherwiſe, *Poverty*;

1. The Goſpel turns it from a malediction to an affliction, from a curſe to a croſs only.

2. 'Tis *in Sanctis honorata*, 'tis advanc'd in many Saints: *Job*, *Lazarus*, *Paul* have undergone it holily.

3. 'Tis *Sanctificata in Chriſto*, 'tis ſanctified in Chriſt's undergoing of it. He took not upon him our riches, but our poverty. Pover- C ty hath this dignity belonging to it; it hath one conformity to Chriſt, that rich men have not.

3. A third falſe ground is, *quia copia interdicta*. An error that *Pelagius* thought, That *under the Goſpel it was unlawful to be rich, and it was neceſſary to ſalvation to abandon wealth, to embrace poverty*. Chriſt indeed bids us *part with all*.

1. In affection, not in poſſeſſion; to unglew our hearts from them; not to ſet our hearts upon them: *If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them*, Pſal. lxii. 10. They may be in our hands, they muſt not be in our hearts. 'Tis *mundi concupiſcentia*, that doth *nocere*, *non ſubſtantia*, Bern. *Paul* bids *Timothy*, not to charge rich men to abandon D riches, but not to be proud of them, to truſt in them, to hoard and with-hold them from a charitable communication, 1 *Tim.* vi. 17. *In divitiis cupiditatem reprehendit, non facultatem*, Aug.

2. In willingneſs and preparation of mind; ſo to enjoy them, as when God calls for them, to be willing to part with them; to forſake wealth, as we muſt Father, Mother, all other comforts, when God calls for them. *Ye ſuffered joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods*, Heb. x. 34.

3. Even actually to forſake them in caſe of ſalvation; in time of E perſecution, when the Church of God ſtands in need of them: As thoſe in the *Acts* ſold all. Otherwiſe, as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks, The poor man *Lazarus* was in rich *Abraham*'s boſom, both meet in heaven.

II. Let us enquire into the true grounds, that moved this Holy man to frame this Prayer to deprecate theſe two extremities. Neither too much, nor too little, but a mean betwixt both, a competency.

1. The firſt may be *Commenſuratio virium*. That's the firſt Rule, and

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and Reaſon of his Prayer; a due eſtimate and proportion of his ſtrength and ability. He takes a juſt ſcantling of his abilities and infirmities, conſiders what eſtate he is beſt fitted for, what burthen he can bear, what will be too heavy for him. He found himſelf ſubject to the temptations of too much want, or plenty; that he could not endure the pinchings of prverty, nor the ſurcharge of plenty; and ſo deſires of God to put him into that condition for which he was fitted. A

That's a Rule of Wiſdom in all our employments, and choice of courſe of life to conſider, *Quid valeant humeri, quid ferre recuſant.* Too much lading may ſink the Ship, too little may expoſe it to every blaſt. *Poverty*, that dejects me, makes me murmur: *riches*, they puff me up, ſwell my heart with pride; *Lord, free me from both of them.* That's the Rule we ſhould obſerve, *according as God hath given to every man the meaſure of ſtrength*, Rom. xii. 3. This proportion God obſerves in diſtributing his Talents, *Mat.* xxv. 15. *to one five, to another two, to another one*, to every man according to his ſeveral ability. We ſhould check our craving deſires, as Chriſt did the ambition of *Zebedee*'s Sons, *Mat.* xx. 22. *Are you able to drink of the Cup?* are we able to weild the eſtate we ſeek and ſue for? Thou that wilt vow poverty and ſingle life, art thou able to undergo that condition? thou that purſueſt greatneſs, haſt thou ſtrength to manage it, and not to be overcome with it? Thus St. *Paul* reſolves the Quære of the *Corinthians* concerning Marriage and Virginity, 1 *Cor.* vii. 7. *Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this maner, and another after that.* As *Saul* queſtioned with *David*, 1 Sam. xvii. 33. *How canſt thou grapple with Goliah? he is an experienced Souldier, thou art but a youth, and he man of war from his youth.* Oh, I have experience, I have ſlain a Bear and a Lyon. Weak brains muſt not clamber into high places. Thou caſteſt thy ſelf into temptation to venter upon that eſtate, to which God hath not fitted thee. *Abſalom* he would be a King, *&c.* B C

2. This holy man makes this prayer againſt too little, or too much; 'tis *approbatio Mediocritatis*, out of the true eſtimate of a ſtate of Mediocrity. Which truly conſidered, is the eveneſt, the beſt eſtate for a comfortable life. A garment too long, or too ſhort is unhandſom, and troubleſom: ſo is an unproportionable means of life. A ſhoe too wide, or too ſtrait, troubles the foot. The private condition with competency breeds the trueſt ſweetneſs. As that's the beſt Scituation of an houſe, that's under the wind, and out of the dirt. Not ſo low, as to be trod upon not ſo high, as to be maligned. As in *Jotham*'s Parable, *Judg.* ix. the ſweetneſs of the Vine, the fatneſs of the Olive muſt be left in a place of eminency. Mediocrity, not too much greatneſs, that free es us from envy, on the one hand; Mediocrity, not too much poverty, that frees us from contempt, on the other hand. D E

3 He prayes againſt theſe two Extreams, Why? *Liberior opportunitas.* The eſtate of Mediocrity gives us a more opportunity for ſerving of God, and minding our ſpiritual eſtate. And that ſhould be the ſcantling and levelling of all our aims. Mark thoſe two Rules *Paul* gives in conſulting about Marriage.

1. The

A 1. The first was, 1 *Cor.* vii. 7. *As every man hath his gift.*

2. The second was, *Verse* 35. *That you may attend upon the Lord without distraction.* That condition of life, that is freest from distractions; that which gives me the best opportunities of serving God, that condition pray for.

Here is a Rule of judging of our outward condition; that which enlarges the opportunities of my service to God; that which lies in the straightest and directest way to Heaven; as this is the best way that brings me to my Journey's end, not that which is the fairest. Now poverty and abundance naturally pester the heart with cares
B and distractions. The poor man, he cries out, *What shall I eat?* and *What shall I drink?* and *What shall I put on?* The rich man hath his thoughts, *Mat.* vi. and the rich man hath his distractions, *Luke* xii. 17. His riches make him cry out, *What shall I do? The abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.* Labour in getting, care in keeping, fear of losing; these trouble his thoughts; The five yoke of Oxen, and the new Purchase makes such men refuse the invitations of God's grace; whereas competency frees from these anxieties.

4. He begs a mediocrity and no more; a fourth Reason is *Temporalium parvi-pensio*; it argues a sober, religious, due estimate he hath
C of these outward and temporal things. He stands in need of them, and so would be loth wholly to want them, but yet desires no more then needs must, cares not to abound in them. He that hath a rectified Judgment in the things of this world, and knows how to set a due value upon them, will shape his desires at this scantling. In spiritual blessings there is an holy covetousness. *Covet the best gifts*, 1 Cor. xii. 31. *Study to excel*, 1 Cor. xiv. 12. *Abound in grace*, 2 Cor. viii. 7. *Be rich in good works*, 1 Tim. vi. 18. Thus St. *Paul*, Phil. iii. 14. *I press forward toward the mark*, &c. But for temporal things, he speaks at another rate; *Having food and rayment, let us therewith be content.* He saith not
D τρυφὰς, Delicates, but τροφὰς Food; not κοσμήματα, ornaments, but σκεπάσματα, rayments, coverings; any filling for the belly; any hilling for the back would serve his turn. And as S. *Paul* instructed his Scholar *Timothy*, so did *Jeremy*, *Baruch*, Chap. xlv. 5. *Seekest thou great things for thy self? Seek them not.* These outward things, they have but the nature of a *viaticum*, a bait in the way; but as much as will serve a mans turn. We should do as men do with lumber, they will buy no more then is necessary; for they cannot carry it away. In grace our desires should know no stint; but in outward things competency should be our rule of seeking and praying. 'Twas so with *Jacob*; *Bread*
E *to eat, and rayment to put on*: he asked no more; *Gen.* xxviii. 20.

5. He begs a mediocrity, freedom from both these distracting conditions; we must conceive his Prayer to be *Votum limitatum*, circumscribed, and bounded with due reservations. He prayes against Poverty; but with submission: if God sees fit it should be otherwise, he can stoop unto it. Our blessed Saviour taught us how to desire these outward things in that Prayer of his to his Father, *Luke* xxii. 42. *Father, if*

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thou be willing, remove this Cup from me, nevertheleſs not my will, but thine be done. Father remove from me this bitter cup of poverty, or this ſweet over-flowing cup of plenty, if it be thy will, let them both paſs over-me; but, if thou ſeeſt it good to allot me either, I ſubmit, *ſiat voluntas Domini.*

'Tis lawful to wiſh and pray for a competency; but a Chriſtian muſt be fitted for any extremity. *Agur*'s pitch is lawful; but we muſt not ſtop there. Grace in the ſtrength can enable us for all eſtates. *Paul*'s ſcantling muſt be aimed at, *Phil.* iv. 12. *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer need.* Our firſt wiſhes and deſires muſt be for conveniencies; but our reſolutions muſt be for any condition. If God call me to abundance, I will learn to receive it thankfully, to enjoy it ſoberly, to communicate it charitably. If he call me to poverty, here I am; *I can do all things through Chriſt who ſtrengthens me.* It was Faith in *Abraham* that made him beg *Iſaac*; by Faith he received him: I, but God will have his faith wound up to an higher pitch; his Faith muſt enable him to kill his Son, when God calls for him. *Agur*'s faith craves mediocrity, *Paul*'s faith undergoes want, poverty, nakedneſs, perſecution, every extremity.

We have ſeen his Deprecation; now follows,

Secondly, His Petition, his Prayer for a competency, a convenient portion of temporal bleſſings; *Feed me with food convenient for me.* For underſtanding the purpoſe of this Petition, we muſt make a double enquiry:

Firſt, *Quid cibus?* what he means by *Food?*

Secondly, *Quid cibus dimenſi?* what he means by *food convenient for him?*

Firſt, *Quid cibus?* What means this Holy man, when he prayes for *food?* The neceſſities of life are many, manifold comforts we ſtand in need of. I anſwer, by food we are to underſtand whatſoever is requiſite and uſeful for the ſuſtaining of this preſent life, all neceſſary ſupplies to ſupport and maintain us in our temporal being. S. *Pauls* calls them, in a comprehenſive word, τὰ βιωτικὰ, *the things of this life*, 1 Cor. vi. 4. St. *James*, *Things which are needful for the body*, Chap. ii. 16. Thus St. *Auguſtine* expounds that Petition of our Lord's Prayer, *Give us this day our daily Bread*; *Quando rogamus panem, quicquid nobis propter carnem noſtram in terris neceſſarium eſt poſtulamus.* *Jacob* expreſſes it (as before) *Bread to eat, Clothes to put on.* So St. *Paul*, *Having food and rayment.* Our Saviour expreſſes it in theſe three particulars, *What ſhall we eat? What ſhall we drink? Wherewith ſhall we be cloathed?* Mat. vi. 31. All thoſe things wherein the life of man conſiſts, thoſe ſtays and props, that ſhore up theſe houſes of Clay, and continue our welfare, are here underſtood. When we call for food; food, and raiment, and dwelling, are all comprehended under this Term.

And he expreſſes his deſires of the conveniencies of life under this Term, for theſe reaſons;

I. *Food*

A I. *Food*, 'tis the moſt natural and immediate ſupply for life. He asks not a competency of Silver and Gold, a ſtock of money; becauſe in theſe the life of man conſiſts not. All a man's *care and travel is for his belly*, as *Solomon* ſaith. If God give thee food and raiment, what if he furniſh thee not with thoſe dead commodities? 'Tis the morſel of bread, not the wedg of Gold that Nature ſeeks for. Natural riches ſtand not in ſuch Treaſures. *Adam* the richeſt man upon earth, his abundance was not in money; but in the proviſions of nature, that ſerved for ſuſtenance. Theſe are properly called *God's riches*: *David* ſurveying the compleatneſs of the world in all uſeful Creatures, ſaith, B *The whole earth is full of thy riches*, Pſal. civ. 24. *Thou filleſt their bellies with thy hid Treaſures*, Pſal. xvii. 14.

II. *Food*, 'tis the moſt neceſſary ſupply. There are many comfortable and beneficial helps to life, our habitations and dwellings, and other defences to ſhelter and ſuccour us; but nothing is ſo immediately the fuel of life, as our food and ſuſtenance. 'Tis called the *ſtaff and ſtay of bread*, which ſupports our life. Houſes, and garments, and other ſupplies were uſeleſs to *Adam* in Paradiſe; but even then food was neceſſary; in that his life conſiſted. Nature may come to ſome extremities in other things and yet ſubſiſt, as in poor *Lazarus*; but withdraw ſuC ſtenance, then our breath fails, and we return to our duſt.

III. *Food*, 'tis the moſt daily and ordinary ſupply. Chriſt calls it *our daily bread*. The Lamp of Life muſt be continually fed with this Oil, or it goes out. In the Wilderneſs God renewed their food daily, Manna every morning; but he did not miraculouſly renew, but continue their garments to them: To teach us, that the daily ſupply of food, 'tis a point of neceſſity; but the daily, and frequent, and various ſupply of garments, and cloathing, 'tis exceſs and vanity.

Secondly, *Quid cibus dimenſi?* What is meant by *Food convenient?* What's that we call *cibum dimenſi?* 'Tis a general word, of an uncerD tain extent. *Food convenient*, "True ſaith every man, that's all we ſeek "for to be fitted for conveniency, to have things about us, to be ſet "out of the compaſs of want, and to have things decent.

I. The proud man and ambitious, that glories in his abundance, that prides it in his plenty, he aims at nothing but decency and conveniency.

II. The voluptuous and luxurious man, that muſt be *cloathed in the fineſt linen*, and muſt *fare deliciouſly every day*, he pleads for nothing but conveniency.

III. The covetous and worldly man, that *enlarges his deſire as Hell*, E is ſtill getting and heaping, 'tis his aim, nothing but conveniency. The rich man in the Goſpel thought it was for his conveniency to pull down his Barns, and build bigger.

Conveniency is a ſtint and meaſure, that ſtands not *in puncto indiviſibili*; 'tis not of one and the ſame ſize; not like the Gomer, that meaſured out the *Manna alike to all*, Exod. xvi. but hath its latitude and variety. Take the nature of it in theſe four

Serm. III. Proportions, which will ſet out the true ſcantling for our deſires. A

1. Is Civil.
2. Moral.
3. Natural.
4. Religious.

1. The firſt ſcantling and proportion of convenient food, and means of living, is a civil dimenſion. Vouchſafe me what ſupplies of temporal bleſſings are neceſſary and convenient for my civil condition. And that hath a double proportion in it.

1. The firſt is to be taken from our ſtate and calling, in which God hath placed us. So we are to pray for a competency of temporal bleſſings, by which we may walk to the faithful and comfortable diſcharge of our Calling and Vocation. And here is a latitude. A publick and an honourable calling and employment requires a fuller ſupply of temporal bleſſings, then a private and inferiour. The eſtate of a King, and his authority requires greater abundance then of any ſubject. And that may be but competency, nay indecency and poverty in a King, which yet is far too much in a private man. 'Twas a fault in *Nabal*, and a culpable exceſs, that *he made a feaſt like the feaſt of a King*, 1 Sam. xxv. 36. And ſo for other delights the Prophets ſeem to blame them, *Amos* vi. 5. *They invent to themſelves Inſtruments of Muſick, like David*; they will equal the pleaſures of King and Court. Treaſures are neceſſary for Princes. We find one *Eſai.* iii. 7. refuſing place of Government, becauſe he was poor. As 'tis in the nouriſhment of the natural body, ſupply of nouriſhment is made to every member, according to the capacity, and uſe, and employment of it, *according to the meaſure of every part*, Epheſ. iv. 10. So in the civil body, more ſupply to the nobler and choicer parts, that are of more excellent function. Here is one ſtint to proportion thy deſires, exceed not the bounds of thy Calling. B C D

" Not too much Lord, nor too little; thou, that haſt placed me " in this Calling, ſupport me in it, ſhew thy bleſſing upon it, and " it ſuffices.

2. A ſecond Proportion in our civil condition is a proportion of our charge, that God hath committed to us. Hath God made thee a Maſter of a Family given thee the place of a Steward over others? bleſt thee with Wife and Children? the care of theſe muſt ſet an honeſt proportion to thy deſires. " Lord, I beg not riches for " them, not to make them as the great Ones of the earth; but " thine they are, and thou gaveſt them me, enable thy ſervant to a " moderate and competent ability of providing for them. E

'Tis a Theme, that Worldly-mindedneſs needs not to be put in mind of. Infidelity believes this Doctrine. So that *Paul* tells us, 1 *Tim.* v. 8. *He that provides not for his own, is worſe then an Infidel.* And ſo a man may be careful to provide for his own, and yet be no better then an Infidel: 'Tis true; but yet in conſcience of God's command, they that have this charge, are charged with the care

A care of them. *Fathers lay up for their children*, 2 Cor. xii. 14. *A good man leaves an inheritance to his children*, Prov. xiii. 22. A man freed from theſe cares, hath leſs cauſe to be ſollicitous. As *Abraham*, when God promiſed him abundance, ſaid, *LORD, what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I have no childe?* Gen. xv. 2. And 'tis a greater vanity, that *Solomon* complains of, *for a man, that hath neither childe, nor brother, and yet there is no end of his labour.* Otherwiſe *Jacob*'s care muſt take place, *When ſhall I provide for mine own houſe alſo?* Gen. xxx. 30.

2. A ſecond Proportion, 'tis Moral; *Feed me with food convenient*
B *for me*, convenient for my life, not for my luſt. He prayes to ſatisfie neceſſity; convenience, not concupiſcence. 'Tis the Prayer of a ſober, temperate man; not of a voluptuous Epicure. He begs for Bread, not for Quails. This ſets a due ſcantling to our deſires, to ſuſtain Nature, not to pamper it; to give ſatisfaction to our ſober deſires, not our inordinate, *Rom.* xiii. 14. *Make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof.* There are luſts that are violent, they war in our members; Religion knows no Prayer to ſatisfie them, *Rom.* viii. 12. *We are not debtours to the fleſh*, nor ow any ſervice to it. This was the provoking ſin of the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 18, 19. they asked meat
C for their luſts; *Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderneſs?* A ſtanding feaſt, nothing elſe would ſerve them. This St. *James* reproves, *Chap.* iv. 3. *You ask amiſs to conſume upon your luſts.* But what got the *Iſraelites* with their Quails? they had with them a Judgment; *While the meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and ſlew the fatteſt of them*; it multiplied the graves of luſt. When Chriſt fed the people graciouſly, he fed them miraculouſly, with Barley-loaves and Fiſhes; not with Manchets and Pheſants, but a frugal, ſober, temperate relief. An intemperate man in want, is doubly miſerable. He hath two cravers, Nature craves, and Luſt raves. A ſober
D man feels not ſcarcity ſo ſoon. Temperance can be content with ſober fare. Thus the Prophet foretelling a ſcarcity, ſhews who will firſt and moſt feel it, *Joel* i. 5. *Awake, ye Drunkards, and weep, and howl, all ye drinkers of Wine; becauſe of the new Wine: for it is cut off from your mouth.* If that fails, a Drunkard is undone: but *Elijah*, and ſuch as he can be content, if the Brook and the running-water fail not.

3. A Third Proportion, 'tis Natural; give me a competency, that which may ſuffice bare nature, and relief of my life; that which may ſupport me, though meanly, hardly. Give me that, Lord, and 'tis
E ſufficient. Natural neceſſities are ſoon ſupplyed; that's was *Jacob*'s Vow, *Food and rayment*; *Job*'s *neceſſary food*: Chap xxiii. 12. Let it be the *bread of labour*, the *bread of ſorrow*, the *bread of affliction*, and the *water of affliction*, or *bread of tears*, or *aſhes like bread*; Nature ſaith, *Sufficit*, *'Tis enough.* Nature laps only, like thoſe three hundred Soldiers, *Judg.* vii. 6. but Carnality, like the reſt of the people, grovels and ſtoops down to ſatisfie the deſires. See what examples Chriſt propounds to us for the cares of this life, he ſaith not, Conſider

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ſider the Lions, (devouring Beaſts) or the Eagles (birds of Prey) but two Sparrows, a little grain ſuffices them. If God ſo provide for us, we are not forgotten. A

4. A fourth Proportion, 'tis Religious. Faith and Piety give a ſweet meaſure and proportion to our deſires. It craves *cibum dimenſi*, that which God in his infinite wiſdom thinks the fitteſt. Naturally we know not what's beſt for us. Nay, in temporal bleſſings, which have no neceſſary connexion with eternal life, Faith cannot alwayes hit upon the juſt meaſure; and therefore it ſubmits and refers it ſelf to God, *Mat.* vi. 32. *Your heavenly Father knows what you need*, and will accordingly make proviſion. Carnal reaſon tells us, *'Tis good to be rich:* Faith ſaith, *No, 'tis not alwayes ſo*; Faith tells us, *I have ſeen riches kept for the owners thereof to their own hurt*, Eccleſ. v. 13. Carnal reaſon tells us, that *Honour and Authority over others is good:* No, ſaith Faith, *I have ſeen one man rule over another to his own hurt*, Eccleſ. viii. 9. Carnal reaſon tells us, that *plenty and abundance, that's good:* No, ſaith Faith, *Man's life conſiſts not in abundance*, Luke xii. 15. *We know not what we ask*, when we *limit the Holy One of Iſrael*. He knows our neceſſities, expediencies, comforts, better then our ſelves. Therefore let's beg of him *cibum dimenſi*, that which he hath ſet forth, and meaſured out for us. Here are the reſignations and ſubmiſſions of Faith. It craves but what it's *dimenſum* comes to; the piece, Lord, thou haſt cut for me, the portion that belongs unto me, that which thou haſt ſet out, and meaſured out for me. B C

'Tis a borrowed Speech, alluding either to that allowance that by the Gomer was meaſured out to every man in the Wilderneſs, every one had his juſt allowance; or to the dealings of Captains with their Souldiers; they have *Canonem*, a juſt meaſure of allowance of food ſet out for them. Our Saviour calls it σιτομέτριον, *Luke* xii. 42. *a portion of meat for every ſervant.* And then here is the *dimenſum*; "Lord, "what thou alloweſt, that portion that thou alloteſt me, I preſcribe "not to thy providence. Faith will not be its own carver. It knows God holds the Gomer in his own hand, and ſo deſires no more then what he ſees fit. The Eye is not ſo ſoon ſatisfied as the belly; but the eye of Faith is ſooner. Infidelity hath falſe meaſures; Faith looks to God's Standard, is content to be fed with Statute-bread. If we were turned into the world to ſcramble, and to ſhift for our ſelves, catch that catch can, it might trouble us to fall ſhort of others: but Faith aſſures, that God hath meaſured out thy portion, and reſts ſatisfied with it. D E

THE

THE FOURTH SERMON ON PROV. XXX. 9.

Leſt I be full and deny thee, *and ſay, Who is the* LORD; *or, leſt I be poor* ———

Vidimus Petitionem.

Now follows,

Thirdly, The laſt main particular of this Holy man's requeſt; and that contains the Motives and Reaſons, by which he ſtrengthens and enforces this Prayer againſt Poverty, and againſt Riches, and why he ſues to God for a Competency; *Leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the* LORD? *or, leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.*

And of theſe his Motives and Reaſons, we will take a double conſideration:

Firſt, We will conſider theſe Reaſons in general, as they have a common reference to both theſe extremities, *too much*, and *too little*.

Secondly, We will conſider them in particular and aſunder, as they are proper and peculiar to either of theſe eſtates.

I. What is it that moves him to pray againſt Riches, *Leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the* LORD?

II. Then follows the Motives, why he prayes againſt Poverty; *Leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.*

Firſt, Let us look upon this Motive in general, this earneſt enforcement of his Prayer againſt the incumbrances and diſtractions of temporal things. And in it we may diſcover many evidences of goodneſs, many prints of Piety, many motions of an holy and heavenly ſpirit. Take them in theſe Expreſſions and Obſervations. Six there are;

I. The firſt print of Piety, in this cloſure of his Prayer, is *Sancta methodus*, the religious order, and heavenly art, he obſerves in his Devotion.

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Devotion. What is the first thing he payes for? what's that, that hath the birth-right in his supplications? Freedom from sin, *Remove far from me vanity and lies.* What's the last thing he prayes for? what's the closure and upshot of his Devotion? That's *freedom from temptations*, that may lead him into sin; that he may not *sin against God*, and *deny* him; nor *steal*, and so dishonour God by falshood and forswearing. The care of his spiritual estate, the fear of falling from God by any sin or wickedness, that takes up his first, and his last thoughts, the choicest and chiefest of all his Devotions. The cares of this life, they have an inferiour and secondary consideration; the main part of his devotion, 'tis for his spiritual condition.

'Tis a Rule among Oratours, to place the strongest and most effectual parts of their Eloquence, in the first and last place of their Declamations; if any thing be of less moment, to put it into the midst. And 'tis the manner of men, skilful in Military Discipline, to place their less considerable Soldiers in the middle of their Army, not in the front and rear; there they place their chiefest strength. See this Art practised by this holy man. First he prayes for his Soul: lastly he prayes for his Soul. The thoughts for his temporal welfare, are placed between them both, as a matter of less consideration. *In medium quasi agmen*, they are cast, as it were, in the middle rank, according to *Homer*'s method, placing infirm things in the middle. Indeed the soul deserves a double care;

1. The Soul, 'tis the most noble and principal.
2. The necessities of the Soul are more various and manifold.
3. The miscarriages of the Soul are more dangerous and deadly.

And so the care of the Soul, challenges the most of our thoughts, the chiefest and frequentest of our desires and prayers.

'Tis a tryal and discovery of most mens Devotions. The prayers of many, they are carnal prayers, not savouring of the Spirit. The speech of St. *John* is true of most men, *He that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaks of the earth*, John iii. 31. It may be he can be freequent and importunate for temporal blessings; but a little devotion, a few cold wishes will serve for the Soul. In this case we put off God, as *Abraham* would have done; God promised him *Isaac*, and in him the Messias: *Oh*, saith he, *that Ishmael might live before thee*, Gen. xvii. 18. When we hear of Promises made to our Souls, Oh! we would exchange them for worldly favours; rather that God would testifie his love to us in temporal things. No, no; Then Religion and Piety have a due place and sway in our hearts, when they have the place and power of *Primum principium*, and *Ultimus finis*, when they begin and end our Supplications, are the main sum of all, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, of our cares and prayers. He begins his suit for spirituals, he ends it for spirituals, he wedges in the other Prayer for a competency of temporal things, as a *Viaticum*, or Bait only in the mid-way; as our Saviour doth the Petition for dayly bread. Six Petitions for spirituals, to one for temporals; and that placed *in medio*, as in the passage only; to teach us to

A us to use the world and the comforts of it, *ut hospitium, non ut domicilium*, only as an Inn or baiting place in our journey to Heaven. That's the first Print of Piety, *Sancta methodus.*

II. A second Print of Piety in this Motive, and Closure of his Prayer, is *Sancta intentio*, an holy aim and intention in this Prayer concerning his temporal estate. He prayes against incumbrances and distractions of outward things, desires a competency. Why so? what's the reason of his desire? not for it self, and for the freedom from these extremities, and only to enjoy a present contentment; but in an holy reference to his spiritual estate and condition; for the furB therance of that. 'Tis possible, a meer natural man out of civil and moral Principles and Considerations, may wish himself freed from too much, and too little, and desire only a mediocrity in outward things. I, but here he makes a full period, he aims no further. 'Tis out of natural apprehensions of more ease and expediency, and more quiet tranquillity, that he might live *succinctè*, in a more commodious manner. But this Holy man looks beyond that, and terminates all his Desires and Prayers for temporal blessings in an holy reference to his spiritual condition, to the promoting of that, that so he may further his after-account, and be fitted to serve God more effeC ctually.

Many a natural man, nay, many an Heathen have attained to this moderation in outward things, but yet out of inferiour ends. Their Motives are all within the compass and sphere of carnal reason; *It suits best with me; I may enjoy my self more fully and freely; I shall be Master of my self and my time; I shall not suffer the vexations, that riches or poverty occasion; I shall be out of the lash of envy, and not subject to scorn or contempt.* That's all that flesh and blood aims at. But Piety fetches its reason of this Prayer from higher Principles, and more spiritual thoughts and considerations; *O keep me from the exD tremities of too much, or too little, lest they endanger my soul and spiritual estate; Free me from the Briars of Poverty, and the Thorns of Riches, lest they wound and pierce my conscience, lest they entangle me, and hedge up my way and passage to heaven; that my account may be more easie and comfortable, that I may attend upon the Lord without distraction.* Thus Saint *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to *endure hardness*; How? O, as a *good Souldier of Jesus Christ, and not to entangle himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Souldier.* That's the second Print of Piety, *Sancta intentio.*

E III. A third Print of Piety in this his Prayer, and the Motive of it; *Lest I be rich, or lest I be poor*, is *Sancta suspicio*, an holy shiness and circumspection, nay, an holy jealousie and suspition, that he carries in his minde of these temporal things, *I may get a mischief by them.* Take it in these three Particulars:

1. Temporal things, our outward and Secular affairs, all worldly conditions are hazardous, they are capable of a *Ne forte*. They

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are attended, and beſet with dangers. There are *præcipitia*, downfalls on both ſides of them; not any eſtate of life, but breeds them. Riches, that hath its danger; Poverty, that hath its train of temptations. Every Calling and Condition may occaſion our ruin. Indeed, ſome Eſtates and Callings are in themſelves unlawful, and wicked, and thoſe that live in them are, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks, *ex Officio peccatores*, Sinners by profeſſion. Theſe are not to be thought upon with ſuſpition; but to be avoided with deteſtation. But even our lawful employments, our ſtations and conditions, which are juſt and warrantable, have alſo their hazards. In ſome degree or other, every ſtate in this world, is, as *David* ſpeaks, a *ſlippery place*, Pſal. lxxiii. 18. The World is called *a Sea of Glaſs*, Rev. iv. 6. The walking in the World, 'tis going upon Ice, ſlippery, brickle, dangerous. In which reſpect *Tertullian* calls a Chriſtian, *ſalutis funambulus*, one who walks upon a rope, eaſily ſway'd awry, and caſt into danger. A B

1. In themſelves, they are capable of abuſe and miſcarriage. Many rubs and ſtumbling-blocks, many ditches and down-falls, that have drowned men in perdition. It made St. *John* give us this warning, *Love not the World, nor the things of the world*, 1 John ii. 15.

2. 'Tis worſe by our corruption, that's eagerly bent to abuſe even the lawfulleſt things. St. *Peter* aſcribes the corruption of the world to Luſt; *Having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt*, 2 Pet. i. 4. A corrupt heart will take miſchief in any courſe of life; as a Drunken man ſtumbleth in the eveneſt way. In every ſtrong and violent luſt, there is *ſpiritualis quædam ebrietas*. Make him rich, and he is proud; poor, and he is falſe. C

3. Every temporal condition and calling hath many hazzards, and dangers in it, through the malice of Satan. He hides his ſnares and gins in them to catch our ſouls. He makes our *table*, Pſal. lxix. 22. *to become a ſnare to us, and that which ſhould have been for our welfare, to become a trap. He is the god of this world*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. and uſes the world as his bait, and lure, to take us by. He places his ambuſhments in theſe outward things, and ſo ſets upon us unawares. He takes advantage from every eſtate. Are we in wealth? he bids be proud: are we poor? he tempts us to curſe God and die. Thus he made *Judas* his Office of bearing the bag, the occaſion of his ruin. That's the firſt, *Secularia periculoſa*. D

2. A ſecond Particular is, this Holy man conſiders this Truth, the dangers in every eſtate, and ſo in the choice of his temporal condition he is timerous and circumſpect. He forecaſts theſe dangers, he ruſhes not upon theſe outward things at all adventures, but looks upon them with an holy jealouſie, forecaſts the miſchiefs and inconveniencies that are incident. 'Tis the Devil's policy to ſhew us the deſirable part of the World; but he hides and conceals, the vexations and temptations. As to Chriſt he ſhewed the *glory of the world*, but not the ſorrows and miſchiefs. And it muſt be our wiſdom to ponder E

the

A the dangers, that attend us in all our courſes. Not to conſider the profit, or pleaſure, or advantage of ſuch a condition; but to look upon the ſnares alſo; to ſee *Jael*'s Nail, as well as her Milk; *Dalilah*'s Sciſſers, as well as her embraces; the ſting of the Bee, as well as the Honey: To ſee,

1. The lawfulneſs of it; Is *this a warrantable courſe of life?*

2. Not to reſt only in the lawfulneſs of it, but forecaſt the evils and temptations that are incident. Thus St. *Paul*, *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient*, 1 Cor. vi. 12. This courſe is lawful, but will not put me upon ſuch, and ſuch temptaB tions. Forecaſt them, and arm thy ſelf againſt them.

3. A third Particular, the World, and every condition in it, being thus dangerous, ſee the Piety of this Holy man, he chooſes that condition of life, that is freeſt from occaſions of ſinning againſt God. Riches, O, they are full of ſnares; Poverty, that hath its temptations; the ſtate of mediocrity and competency, that's the ſafeſt: therefore that he begs of God. Thus *Paul* aſſoils the doubt about marriage or ſingle life, which they ſhould chooſe; firſt let them look to their gift and ability, 1 *Cor.* vii. 7. *Every man hath his proper gift of God*; but then, *Verſe* 35. *I ſpeak for your own profit, not that I may caſt a ſnare* C *upon you; but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without diſtraction.* He adviſes to that, which

1. Is moſt profitable for Piety.
2. Caſts feweſt ſnares upon us.
3. Is moſt decent and becoming Chriſtians.
4. Diſtracts us leaſt in the ſervice of God.

Thus *Joſeph* dealt with his Brethren, he might have advanced them in the Court, beſtowed great Places upon them; no, he would not, but kept them in a lower, but yet a ſafer, leſs dangerous employment: *Thy ſervants Trade hath been about Cattel, even from* D *our youth until now, both we, and alſo our Fathers; now therefore we pray thee, let thy ſervants feed our Sheep in the Land of Goſhen*, Gen. xlvi. 34. xlvii. 4. 'Tis a good evidence of Piety, to forſake a more plentiful portion of temporal things, becauſe ſpiritually dangerous; and to embrace a more mean and inferiour condition, becauſe ſafer from ſin. That's the third Print of Piety, *Sancta ſuſpicio.*

IV. A fourth Print of Piety in this Prayer, *Sancta prælatio*, an holy preferring and advancing of his ſpiritual eſtate before his temporal. Here are two eſtates, the one temporal and ſecular, the E other ſpiritual. And ſo here are two deſires; he ſeeks for ſupplies in both, takes care of both. (We muſt do ſo, we are *filii ſeculi*, and *filii Dei.*) I, but which muſt give way to the other? which of theſe prefers he to be principal? which muſt give law, and preſcribe to the other? See his Piety; his ſpiritual eſtate muſt preſcribe, and order, and moderate his temporal; not his temporal his ſpiritual. He prayes not thus, *Give me ſo much religion,*

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and grace, as may further me in my thriving and proſpering in the world; but, *Give me ſuch a portion of this world, as may beſt ſuit with the growth and improvement of Religion*; *ſuch an allotment of outward eſtate, as may help me forward in my ſpiritual; ſo much temporal means, as may be commodious and advantageous for heaven.* Here is a true print and character of a pious man, that minds his ſalvation in good earneſt; he will make the World to ſtoop to Religion, and to take law from it, and not Religion to the World. His conſcience ſhall guide his purſe and his profit, not his profit his conſcience. A

Whatſoever thou ſetteſt up in thine heart as thy chief aim, that will meaſure out, and ſet bounds to all other inferiour things. 'Tis *menſura reliquorum*, and *ultimus finis, dat menſuram mediis.* Now an Hypocrite, in whom the World bears ſway, what proportion keeps he? The world and his baſe ends, that ſets bounds to his Religion; *So much Religion as may ſtand with my profit, or pleaſure, or credit*: theſe muſt bear ſway, more Religion he will not admit of. He doth *uti Deo, ut fruatur mundo. Not too little Religion, or none at all*; *Men will cry ſhame of me, I ſhall be counted an Atheiſt, it may hinder my profit, that*: *nor yet too much Religion in any caſe; if that get any ſway, it may prejudice my profit, or I may be ſcorned and maligned.* Thus there are that make Religion an underling to the World, it muſt be ſtinted and kept at an allowance by it; they make it a Lacquey and Journey-man to the World. *Æſtimant fidem pretio viliſſimo, bono temporali.* The World is the Standart of their Religion. No, Piety and Religion is of a commanding nature, it muſt bear ſway and over-rule, place and diſplace all other things at pleaſure. B C

Many can entertain Religion as a ſervant to bring in their profit; or, may be, more civilly as a Gueſt or Friend, take ſuch as he findes: But if it finds fault, or begins to controul, away with it. As the *Sodomites* entertained *Lot*, and uſed him civilly, as a ſojourner; but when he began to take upon him, and to finde fault, then they endure him not. Nay, Religion and Piety will not enter into any mans heart, but upon better Terms; *The World muſt be my Underling, no more of it, then I like and allow.* It muſt have recourſe and inſpection into all thy tradings and pleaſures, ſet limits to them all. God will not admit any to take up his Religion, but upon theſe terms. When the people ſaid, *Joſh* xxiv. 18. *We will ſerve the* LORD, *and take him for our God*, *Joſhua* tells them in the next verſe, *Ye cannot ſerve the* LORD, *for he is an holy and a jealous God*, he will not brook any unlawful courſe. They ſay, "He that takes an *Hebrew*-ſervant, takes "not a ſervant, but a Maſter to himſelf; they would be no drudges, "they; 'tis true of Piety. God takes it in foul ſcorn, Eſai. xliii. 24. *Thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy ſins.* That's the fourth Print of Piety, *Sancta prælatio.* D E

V. A fifth Print of Piety in this Motive, *Leſt I be full and deny; leſt I be poor and ſteal, and forſwear*, is *Sancta præviſio*, an holy forecaſt and foreſight, tha he hath of the dangerous downfals and deſcents

A descents of Sin, the multiplying nature of it, how one Sin begets another.

1. He is afraid of Riches. Why ſo? leſt I ſurfet of them. What then? leſt that breeds pride and profaneſs in me, and at laſt, brings me to *Atheiſm*.

2. He is afraid of Poverty. Why? leſt that bring me to pilfering and ſtealing, and that carry me further, to Swearing and Perjury. True Piety knows there is no ſtint in Sin: but fears and foreſees a downfal into extremity; it dares not venture upon the leaſt beginnings of any ill, for fear of running headlong into all kinde of
B impiety.

'Tis a vain deluſion to ſay, *I will venture upon this ſin, but no further; I will be covetous, but yet juſt.* No, 'twill carry thee, and hurry thee through all kinds of evil. *Judas* meant only to get preferment by Chriſt, then he began to pilfer, and play the Thief, and dealy falſly; at laſt, this covetouſneſs hurryed him to that heynous ſin of betraying Chriſt. *David* meant no more, but ſome dalliance with *Bathſheba*; but it ſtayed not there, but brought him to other ſins, to make *Uriah* drunk, and then to murther him. *Peter* thought only to ſtrain a little courteſie with Chriſt, by diſſembling his knowledge of him; but it
C brought him to ſwearing, and banning, and curſing. 'Tis as eaſie to ſtay thy ſelf in the ſwifteſt running down of a ſteep hill, when thou art half-way, as to ſtay thy ſelf in the beginnings of ſin. Thou wilt be a good-fellow, and no more; take heed thou doeſt not fall into the utmoſt debauchery. Remember *Solomon*, how he fell by degrees. Remember *Alipius* in St. *Auguſtine*, who going only for company to thoſe bloody Spectacles of the Gladiatory Combats, wherein men killed one another, to make ſport for the people, came at laſt to applaud them: *Spectavit, clamavit, exarſit*, ſaith the Father: Remember *Monica*, who began to ſip a little Wine, at laſt came to quaff off full
D cups. *David* ſets out theſe head-long downfalls of ſin: *Let them fall from one wickedneſs to another, and not come into thy righteouſneſs*, Pſal. lxix. 28.

1. Few or none are ſo deſperate at firſt, as to leap into Hell at the firſt daſh; but they will begin with leſs evills, play about the brink of Hell. Tell a young Gallant, he will ſpend all, turn an High-way-man, and come to the Gallows, he will take it ill at your hands; *What do you make of me? What, am I a Dog?* So ſaid *Hazael*, 2 Kings viii. 13. Yet he proved ſo and worſe.

2. There is no ſtop in Sin; but we paſs from one degree to ano-
E ther. Sin is of a multiplying nature. There is a concatenation of vices. A little luſt ſets open the door for a greater. One Devil brings ſeven other Devils worſe then himſelf.

3. 'Tis the art of the Devil, one of his μεθοδια, his ſlights and wiles, to engage us in leſs, ſmaller, more excuſable ſins at firſt; then to inveigle us further, till at laſt he brings us to extremity of ſinning. As ſome Arch-Traitour, that firſt buzzes the people in the head

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head with ſome petty diſcontents, ſeek them redreſſed, then to take up arms, then to open Rebellion. A

4. 'Tis the courſe of God's judgements, when we will be dallying with ſin, to give us over to the power of it in extremity. He withdraws his grace, ſuffers Satan to ſtand at our right hand, and to take us at pleaſure. This, this holy man foreſaw; and conſidering, trembles at the long-train of ſin: if he yield willingly to any, he is in danger of all. Oh! then avoid the firſt beginnings of ſin; think no ſin ſmall, which is a ſtep and degree to greater. Give not way to the Water, no not a little, leſt it break down the banks. Keep a narrow watch over our ſelves, that we be not overtaken. B Withſtand the firſt motions and enticements to ſin; watch over thine heart, leſt thou fall: if thou haſt ſlipt, be ſure to riſe up by ſpeedy Repentance. Beg of God to awaken conſcience, to warn us of the leaſt evil, and to prevent us by his Grace. That's the fifth Print of Piety, *Sancta praviſio*.

VI. A ſixth Print of Piety in this Motive, *Leſt I be full and deny thee, or leſt I ſteal, and take thy Name in vain*, is *Summa ſolicitudo*. What's the main thing he is ſolicitous of? the grand miſchief, that he moſt fears in both theſe eſtates? The main and utmoſt upſhot into which his fear reſolves it ſelf, is impiety againſt God; leſt C I ſin preſumptuouſly, or blaſphemouſly againſt him. Pride in it ſelf is a great ſin, to be puffed up with Riches; and ſtealing is an heynous crime, in wronging our Brethren: but that which the ſoul of this Holy man moſt of all deteſts, is that God's Name and Honour ſhould be blaſphemed.

Agur, in this Motive, diſcovers three Evidences of Piety.

1. The miſchief which he fears in both Eſtates is *Peccatum*, Sin.

2. A worſe thing he fears, that's *multiplex peccatum*, the guilt of many ſins, the engendering and multiplying of one ſin by another.

3. But the main evil of all, that his ſpirit trembles at, is, leſt he D ſhould offer contempt and deſpight immediately to God himſelf.

Indeed in every ſin there is an implicit, ſecret, virtual contempt offered to God. As *Samuel* told *Saul*, *Rebellion*, in any kinde, *is as the ſin of witchcraft, and ſtubborneſs is an iniquity, and Idolatry*, 1 Sam. xv. 23. This ſcared *Joſeph* from Adultery, *How can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* Gen. xxxix. 9. In all kinds of ſin we wrong our ſelves and others; but here is the malignity of every ſin, that it violates God. In any ſin that which makes it properly ſinfull, is, that it is againſt God. As in wronging our Neighbours, *Lev.* vi. 2. *If a ſoul ſin and commit a treſpaſs againſt the* LORD, *and lie* E *unto his neighbour in that which was delivered to him to keep, or in fellowſhip, or in taking away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour*; all ſins of this nature intrench upon God. But yet the conſcience of a pious man eſpecially ſtartles at thoſe ſins, that immediately offer violence and contempt to *God's* Glory and Majeſty. In every ſin we offend God as a Law-giver; but in thoſe ſins, which reſolve upon his perſon and

A and glory, we ſin againſt him as the party wronged. By the former we diſpleaſe him; by the latter we reproach him. As a Thief or Felon offends againſt the King in his Laws; but a Traytor offends againſt his Laws and his Perſon. Chriſt confirms this, when the Lawyer asked him, *Which was the greateſt Commandment?* Matth. xxii. 37. *Thou ſhalt love the* LORD *thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy minde*; Verſe 38. *This is the firſt and great Commandment.* So, which is the great ſin that is forbidden? Contempt, and hatred, and blaſphemy againſt God.

1. It ſins againſt the moſt excellent Object: and, according to
B the quality of it, ſo is the Offence.

2. The Obligations to God are more binding, than to any man; we owe more to him. As a man is bound to love his Parents more than his Brothers; they are the Fountain of Life to him.

3. To ſin againſt the Glory of God, is the greateſt ſin; becauſe 'tis moſt repugnant to the laſt and utmoſt end of us, and all our deſires, the Glory of God. *Magnum malum exiſtimamus furtum, quia pecuniam ſummum bonum putamus*: Hier.

It ſhould rectifie our judgments, to judge as God doth. A rich man oppreſſing, Oh! we cry out againſt him; or a poor man
C ſtealing! every man will be an Officer to apprehend the Thief: But a prophane Blaſpemer, an Atheiſt, an Idolater, a Prophaner of God's Glory, Worſhip, Sabbaths, they are ſlight ſins. It were an unworthy carriage to the King to urge his Lawes in our own behalf, to puniſh a petty Larceny; but, if a Traytour ſhould attempt upon the King's Perſon, or Crown, to ſit ſtill, and ſlight it: Yet thus we deal with God and his Lawes; thoſe that concern our ſelves, we regard; thoſe that are to ſafe-guard his glory, and honour, we never regard them. That's the laſt Print of Piety, *Summa ſolicitudo.*

D Hitherto we have conſidered the Motives of this Prayer in general, in ſix Prints of Piety: Now.

Secondly, Let us take them aſunder, ſee them apart.

I. What's the danger of Riches, that makes him pray againſt them? *Leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the* LORD?

II. What's the danger of Poverty, that makes him pray againſt it? *Leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the Name of my God in vain.*

I. Come we to the firſt, *Leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the Lord?* So that here are two Sins, that he forecaſts, and fears in being Rich:

E 1. Fulneſs.

2. Prophaneſs. Riches, they occaſion fulneſs; and fulneſs, that will breed prophaneſs, and contempt of God.

1. The firſt noyſom weed that growes out of a rich Soil, 'tis the ſin of fulneſs. And is that ſuch a ſin? Plenty and abundance, and fulneſs of all things, cannot in it ſelf be properly a Sin. God promiſes to his people a *fulneſs of all good things*, Deut. vi. 11. I anſwer: There is a double Fulneſs: (1.) A

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(1.) A fulneſs of poſſeſſion, when we feel not the leaſt want of any thing; our Barns full, our Garners full, our Store-houſes full. This fulneſs the Wiſe-man counts dangerous, but not ſinful and vitious. A

(2.) A fulneſs of fruition. And by fruition I underſtand it not in a ſtrict ſenſe, as it imports a delightful enjoying, and orderly uſe of outward enjoyments, which things belong to the bleſſings and promiſes of the Goſpel; in which reſpect the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Tim.* vi. 17. that *God gives unto us* πάντα εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν, *all things richly to enjoy*: but I take it here for that full glut, that ſome have in the enjoying theſe outward things; when we deny our ſelves nothing, ſatisfie every deſire, purſue our pleaſures to the utmoſt. Saint *Auguſtine* deſcribes ſuch men, *In cibum, & potum non ex officio deſcendunt, ſed per cupiditatem ruunt.* They muſt feed full of all the delights and pleaſures. This is a great evil, and you ſhall ſee the evil of it in two Particulars: B

[1.] In it ſelf 'tis an evil affection.

[2.] As it uſhers in other evils with it, 'tis an evil diſpoſition.

[1.] In it ſelf 'tis an evil affection. This evil comes of Riches, and for this the *Wiſe-man* prayes againſt them. They occaſion a fulneſs of joy and fruition, when we take too much of our wealth, over-uſe, and over-enjoy it, ſpending our ſubſtance in feeding our luſt, and pleaſing our appetites with it. If Riches had no other miſchief, this makes *Agur* afraid of them. Suppoſe they entice thee not to oppreſſion and tyranny; as the rich man's wealth, *Prov.* xviii. 11. in his Caſtle, not only to defend himſelf, but to annoy others; as St. *James* deſcribes them, *Ye have deſpiſed the poor; do not rich men oppreſs you, and draw you before the judgment-ſeats?* Chap. ii. 6. So *Chap.* v. 1. he thunders againſt the rich, *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your miſeries that ſhall come upon you.* Why ſo? Not only for their covetous hoarding their gold and their ſilver; *Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten, your gold and ſilver is cankered*: nor for their cruel oppreſſing, *The hier of the Labourer is kept back by you*, Verſe 4. but Verſe 5. *Ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and been wanton, ye have nouriſhed your hearts, as in a day of ſlaughter.* Oh! we think ſuch Rich men as offer violence to none, but only enjoy themſelves and their pleaſures, worthy men; nay, we commend them highly: *Pſal.* xlix. 18. *Men will praiſe thee, when thou doeſt well to thy ſelf.* They ſpeak well and honourably of ſuch men as theſe. But in God's account, this glut of wealth, and a full ſatiety of all pleaſure, is ſinfull: See this *Pſal.* lxii. 10. *Truſt not in oppreſſion, and become not vain in Robbery; if riches encreaſe, ſet not your hearts upon them*: Not oppreſs, not encreaſe them wrongfully: nay, if God's bleſſing encreaſe them, yet delight not too much in them, take heed of a ſurcharge. *Non rapit villam alienam*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, *ſed minùs amat ſuam.* It may be thou takeſt not away another man's wealth; but thou loveſt thine own too well. C D E

'Tis

A 'Tis that Sin which *Solomon* fell firſt into, and that wrought his ruin, and which he afterwards confeſſes and repents of, *Eccleſ.* ii. 1. *I ſaid in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleaſure*, then he would build him goodly Houſes, Gardens, and Orchards, ſtored himſelf with Attendants, got himſelf Men-ſingers, and Women-ſingers, and the delights of the Sons of Men: *Verſe* 8. *Whatſoever his eyes deſired, he kept it not from them*, Verſe 10. he *with-held not his heart from any joy* (and ſurely a King, and rich, and in times of peace, may be allowed this, if any) and yet you know the fearful conſequence, he bewails and laments it. The rich
B Glutton in Hell, what was his ſin? we hear of no oppreſſing, but he *fared diliciouſly every day*, he ſucked out the ſweetneſs of his wealth; 'tis his voluptuouſneſs that damn'd him: *Son, remember, that thou in thy life time receiveds't thy good things, and therefore thou art tormented*, Luke xvi. 19, 25, *&c.* This was that which haſtened the rich man's end, *Luke* xii. 19. he ſet his heart to enjoy his wealth to the full, *I will ſay to my Soul, Eat, and drink, and be merry*, thou haſt ſtore enough; that brought his fatal hour upon him. And what the portion of ſuch as he will be, gueſs by what was ſaid of *Babylon*, Rev. xviii. 7. *How much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, and lived delicately; ſo*
C *much torment and ſorrow give her.*

See the heynouſneſs of this Sin of fulneſs, and over-joying of the World.

1. It argues great ſecurity, and this is the uſual fore-runner of deſtruction. When there is no winde, but the Sea is becalmed, then uſually a ſtorm riſes. When the Air is ſtill, then uſually comes an Earthquake. *When they ſhall ſay*, ſaith *Paul*, 1 Theſſ. v. 3. *Peace and ſafety, then ſuddain deſtruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with childe, and they ſhall not eſcape.* When the old World was bent upon their pleaſures, then the deluge came, *Luke* xvii. 26,
D *&c. As it was in the dayes of Noe, --- they did eat, they drank, they marryed wives, they were given in marriage, and the flood came and deſtroyed them all. As it was in the dayes of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they ſold, they planted, they builded, till it rained fire and brimſtone from heaven.* Thoſe places and times, were guilty of heynous and horrid ſins; but he inſtances in their ſecure enjoying the world. It argues great ſecurity. St. *Jude* calls it, Verſe 12. *a feeding without fear.* Thus to enjoy the world, in contempt of God's judgements, 'tis a ſin God will revenge. When the Lord threatned judgements, *Eſai.* xxii. 13. *then behold joy and*
E *gladneſs, eating fleſh and drinking wine*; that ſecurity God would not pardon.

2. This glut and fulneſs of enjoying the world, it begets in us a ſlavery to theſe pleaſures, it makes want and hardſhip to be intolerable to us. This made *Paul* abſtain from many things, *I will not be brought under the power of any*, 1 Cor. vi. 12. A voluptuous man cannot live without his pleaſures. Thus *Moſes* ag-

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gravates the misery, that shall fall upon the *Israelites*, Deut. xxviii. 56. *The tender and delicate woman amongst you, which would not for delicateness and tenderness adventure to set the sole of her feet upon the ground*, she shall suffer these and these things. He that is not over-joyed in plenty, shall not be over-sorrowful in adversity. *They that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not*, in sad times, *they shall mourn, as though they mourned not*. They that are able to say with *Paul*, *We buy, as though we possessed not, and use the world, as not over-using it*, shall be able to say with him, in times of adversity, 2 Cor. vi. 10. *As sorrowful, yet alwayes rejoycing, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things*.

3. This fulness in enjoying the World, argues our over-high prizing of the World, that it hath the possession of our whole heart, and that we make it our chief good. Fruition is an action, that belongs only to our *summum bonum*; we place it upon nothing, but upon that wherein we place our happiness. Doest thou rejoyce thy self to the full in the world? The world then is thy God, and the pleasures of it. St. *Paul* tells such, 2 *Tim.* iii. 4. *They are lovers of pleasures, more then lovers of God*. St. *James* tells such, 'tis spiritual Adultery, *Ye adulterers, and adulteresses, know ye not, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?* James iv. 4. St. *Paul* tells us, *Philip.* iii. 18. that such are that *Atheists, enemies to the Cross of Christ*. It wroung tears from his eyes, to see Christians live so voluptuously, *I tell you weeping, they are enemies to the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who minde earthly things*.

4. This fulness of fruition of present things, it argues small longing, or expectation, or hope of the pleasures of another world. The earnest expectation of them would moderate and abate our present fruition. Thus *David*, describing the present enjoyments of worldly men, *Psal.* 17. 14. *Thou fillest their belly with thy hid treasure*, full of children, and full of all comforts; *but as for me*, Verse 15. *I will behold thy face in righteousness, when I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness*. The expectation of that takes him off from present fruition. *Dulcedo promissorum facit te contemptorem dulcedinum sæculi*, Aug. As he that looks for a second course, will not fill himself with the grosser food, that's served in at first.

5. This fulness of enjoying these present things, 'tis a shrewd sign that we have our portion here. *David* calls these enjoying men, *Psal.* xvii. 14. *The men of this world, that have their portion in this life*. They are like the Prodigal, *Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me*, Luke xv. 12. 'Tis too long for them to stay for heaven; and they that will have their heaven here, shall be sure to miss of it hereafter. "'Tis not (saith St. *Hierom*) the "way God observes, to remove us *à deliciis ad delicias*. He will never bestow upon us two heavens, one here, and another hereafter.

hereafter. They are ſad ſpeeches Scripture uſes to ſuch. St. *James* tells them, *They have lived in pleaſures upon earth*, James v. 5. and therefore muſt not look for pleaſure in heaven too. What ſaith Father *Abraham* to the rich man in Hell? *Son, remember, that thou in thy life-time receivedſt thy good things*, thy pleaſure; not as *arrham ſponſi, ut munera amici, ut beneficia Dei*, but *ut mercedem*, as thy final reward, and thy portion for ever. Nay, what ſaith Chriſt? *Luke* vi. 24. *Wo unto you that are rich, for you have received your conſolation.* There will be a time when we ſhall ſtand in need of conſolation; and if it be already ſpent and gone, what ſhall we do then, when the evil day comes upon us? He ſaith not, *Wo be unto you, for you have received your contentation*; but, *your conſolation.* God allows us contentation in the uſe of his temporal bleſſings; but beware of making them thy conſolation in the full fruition of them. 'Tis enough for us Chriſtians (ſaith St. *Auguſtine*) ſo to be provided for, while we are here below, *ut inferioribus non offendamur, ſolis autem ſpiritualibus delectemur.* 'Tis enough, if we have ſo much, as to free us from vexation only; ſpiritual and heavenly things, they muſt be the matter of our conſolation. *You have already received it*, that's the receipt of the Prodigal, not of the dutiful ſon. A dutiful ſon, if he have preſent maintenance, is willing to ſtay for his full inheritance. As *Gerſon* tells of a Devout man, that when a deluding Apparition was made to him, as of Chriſt in His glory, he ſhuts his eyes, and cryes out, *Nolo hic Chriſtum videre, I deſire not to ſee Chriſt here, but hereafter:* So beg of God, however he deals with thee here, to reſerve thy conſolation for another World. As St. *Chryſoſtom* notes it, they that deſire to grow rich by Uſury, they are deſirous their debtours ſhould ſtill keep their Money, ſory they are when they bring it in, they would have uſe upon uſe: So doth a good Chriſtian deſire his comforts, and portion, and reward ſhould ſtill reſt in God's hand; *Give me not here, LORD, reſerve it for hereafter.* If I may ſo receive, that I may be received: if I may ſo receive the good of this life, that I be not barred the other to come; *tanquam arrham*, as the earneſt of a better inheritance, *Ecce me!* but, if my receiving here ſhall be my laſt receit, if I ſhall receive them *tanquam mercedem*, as my portion for ever, I renounce them, put me out of this receit, and reſerve my part in ſtore for the land of the living.

THE FIFTH SERMON ON PROV. XXX. 9.

Leſt I be full and deny thee, *and ſay, Who* is *the* LORD? *or, leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the Name of my God in vain.*

WE have ſeen this Sin of Fulneſs in it ſelf, as it is a ſinful affection; Now conſider it,

Secondly, As it helps in, and occaſions another and greater Sin, and ſo 'tis a ſinful diſpoſition. Now the Sin it occaſions, and diſpoſes to, and which this Holy man prays againſt, 'tis the Sin of Prophaneſs and Contempt of God, *Leſt I deny* thee, *and ſay, Who is the* LORD?

And that's,

Secondly, The other noiſome Weed that grows out of a rich Soil. This fulneſs and abundant ſurcharge, and over-enjoying of Plenty, is a fruitful diſpoſition to many evils: As an over-rich and fat ſoil of it ſelf ſends forth many noiſom Weeds: ſo doth the heart of man that's fatned with a glut of pleaſures in outward things. 'Tis *ſubactum ſolum*, a ſoil fitted for many ſins to grow out of. The ſins of *Sodom* were fearful and crying ſins; whence had they their firſt riſe? even from this plentiful enjoying of their abundance. This was a rich Country as the Garden of *Eden*, Gen. xiii. 10. and ſee the fruits of their plenty, *verſ.* 2. The men of *Sodom* were wicked, and ſinners before the Lord exceedingly: *Ezekiel* Chap. xvi. 49. aſcribes all their abominations to this ſurcharge. The ſins of *Sodom* were fulneſs of bread, then abundance of idleneſs, then neglect and contempt of the Poor and Needy; then Pride, they were haughty, then they brake out into filthy abominations before the Lord. Their fulneſs did *deſpumare in libidinem*, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks. Theſe and many more are the fruits of fulneſs. Better therefore to be fed upon the ſalt Mariſhes, and ſhort Commons, then to be glutted with fat Paſtures.

But yet the main miſchief, and to which it moſt uſually diſpoſes our

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our hearts, is that, which this Holy man doth forecaſt, 'tis denyal of God. A great and an horrid ſin, and the upſhot of all Impiety; for a man to come to this height of wickedneſs, as to ſet his face, and to open his mouth againſt Heaven, and to bid defiance to God, to offer to pluck God out of his Throne, and to lay his honour in the duſt: Yet this great evil, fulneſs, and abundant fruition of riches, will occaſion in us. And it diſpoſes to a denial of God three ways; A

Firſt, *In ſenſu*, in our underſtanding and judgment.

Secondly, *In cultu*, in the matter of Religion and Worſhip of God.

Thirdly, *In officiis Imperatis*, in thoſe Duties that we owe to God, as fruits and teſtimonies of our acknowledgments of him. B

Firſt, The firſt denyal of God is *in ſenſu*, in our thoughts and apprehenſions we ſhould have of his Majeſty. When we deny him in our judgments, 'tis an expreſs denyal of God, when we come to flat, and open, and down-right Atheiſm, ſaying with the Fool, Pſal. xiv. 1. *There is no God.* Now this over-enjoying and ſurfeiting with abundance, it diſpoſes a man to this great Sin, to queſtion, nay, to deny Gods Being, by three dangerous effects that it hath upon the heart of man.

I. This ſin of Fulneſs, when a mans heart is full of the World, and the pleaſures and profits of it, takes up the whole heart, it leaves no place for the thought or remembrance of God. Thus *Eſai* deſcribes the men of this World, enjoying it to the full, *Chap.* v. 12. *The Harp, and the Viol, and the Tabret, and Pipe, and Wine, are in their Feaſts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither conſider the operation of his hands.* The noiſe of theſe pleaſures drowned all thoughts of God. Thoughts of God, and love of the World, are like Fire and Water, they cannot conſiſt in *intenſe* degrees, they deſtroy each other. When the World hath dominion over a mans heart, it takes up all the rooms and lodgings; if God ſhould offer to come in, it would fare with him, as with Chriſt in *Bethlehem*, *There was no room for him in the Inn*, Luk. ii. 7. When God would lodge in the Underſtanding, that Upper Chamber, that's full of worldly Contrivances; when he would enter into the Memory, lodge there, that's the VVorlds VVarehouſe, that's peſtered with worldly cares; when he would reſide in thy heart and affections, they are the VVorlds Storehouſe; there lies the treaſure of a worldly man. Fulneſs excludes any further entrance; the love of the VVorld juſtles out all thoughts and remembrance of God; *God is not in all his thoughts*, Pſal. x. 4. C D E

II. This Fulneſs of the VVorld diſpoſes to Atheiſm, becauſe worldly men ſet up a falſe Deitie in the ordering and diſpoſing of all worldly things. They ſee not the Hand of God in them; but aſcribe all to a blind caſual courſe of Fortune. Such an one owns not the Providence of God, but imputes all to ſecondary cauſes. His plenty, whence comes it? from the goodneſs of the ſoil, or the ſeaſonable-

neſs

A neſs of the weather, or the influence of the Heavens; nay, he will thank his Dunghil ſooner then his God. *They ſay not in their hearts, Let's now fear the Lord our God that gives rain, both the former and the later, in his ſeaſon, and reſerves unto us the appointed weeks of the Harveſt*, Jer.v.24. His preferment and good ſucceſs in the world, he knows no other cauſe of it, but friendſhip and favour of men. Preferment comes either from the Eaſt, or from the Weſt, or from the South, but not from the Lord. Like *Darius* his Courtiers, they make no prayers unto any God, nor return any thanks, but onely to the King. Like Pope *Adrian*, that gave this profane account of all his prefer-
B ments, Ultrajectum *plantavit*, Lovanium *irrigavit*, Cæſar *dedit incrementum*; *Hic ergo Deus nihil fecit*. Nature and ſecondary cauſes, is all the God a Worldling acknowledges.

III. This Fulneſs endangers us for Atheiſm, becauſe it occaſions a man to judge all happineſs to be in this life. A Worldlings thoughts, like a Fools, are all for the preſent. Let him enjoy the World to the full, here is his Happineſs and his Heaven too. 'Tis Atheiſm not to conſider of another World, to have no thoughts or conſiderations of eternal life. Tell a worldly man of laying up treaſures in Heaven, and of the riches of that heavenly inheritance, he
C ſmiles at it, he will not give a foot of Land here for an Acre in heaven. Tell him of an Harveſt in heaven, his carnal heart will ask, What? Is there any ploughing there? any ſowing and reaping there? Thus the *Sadducees*, that were arrant Atheiſts, believed neither Spirit nor Reſurrection, *Acts* xxiii. 8. They came to Chriſt ſcoffingly, *What Maſter? Are there any marriages in Heaven?* Matth.xxii. No, here they ſet up their reſt. If they may enjoy this world, they will abate God the next. As the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, they would ſtay on this ſide *Jordan*, abate their portion in the land of *Canaan*, becauſe they were already in a rich Country. *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow*
D *we ſhall die*, 1 *Cor.* xv.32. there's an end of the World with them. They know no other condition of their ſouls, but to enjoy theſe preſent things. 'Twas the Speech of an *Atheiſt*, nay, of a Swine; *Soul, eat and drink, take thy pleaſure, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*. Thus Fulneſs breeds Atheiſm *in ſenſu*, corrupts our minds and judgments, and ſo tempts to this great prophaneſs of denying of God.

Secondly, It diſpoſeth to a denyal of God *in cultu*. When a man may be will allow there is a God; but his Religion and Worſhip, and the holy Profeſſion and practice of that, he abandons and forſakes:
E that's a ſecond kind of Atheiſm and denyal of him, when a man comes to that degree of prophaneſs, as to neglect and give over the true Worſhip of God. Thus the Gentiles were Atheiſts, *without God in the world* Eph.ii.12. Why? Did they not confeſs a God? yes verily, they had conſcience of a Divine power: *but when they knew God, they glorified him not as God*, Rom.i.21. they embraced not his Religion. Thus *Eli*'s ſons were Atheiſts, *They were ſons of Belial, they knew*

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knew not the Lord, 1 Sam. ii. 12. that is, they prophanely neglected the true worſhip of God. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Iſrael*, *For a long ſeaſon they were without the true God*, 2 Chron. xv. 3. Why? they ſtill retained the knowledge of God. What then? *They were without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law*; they forſook the worſhip of God, and his Religion, ſo they denyed him. And this kind of denyal of God, fulneſs of enjoying the world doth diſpoſe us to in three degrees. A

I. It begets a backwardneſs to embrace the Profeſſion of Religion. The World and the enjoyments of it, ſtaves men off from Religion. How hardly do rich men, yea how hardly can rich men enter into this Kingdom? In Chriſts time, how few rich men became his Diſciples? The common people, they followed him, but do any of the Rulers believe on him? *Joh.* vii. 48. To the poor the Goſpel is preached, and they embraced it. The rich have no leiſure nor liſt to attend to him and his Doctrine. *Brethren, ye ſee your calling, how that not many Mighty, not many Noble are called.* Neh. iii. 5. *But their Nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord.* Yoaks of Oxen and new purchaſes take up their thoughts, that they can find no leiſure to ſerve God, *Luke* xiv. 18, 19. B

II. If theſe worldly men vouchſafe to own it, yet this Fulneſs begets a careleſneſs in Religion. A man careful for the world is uſually careleſs for Religion; he can ſpare no thought or diligence for matters of God; he can ſpare no water from his Mill of worldly purſuits. Tell a man given up to the world, of the cauſe of Religion, you will find him a meer *Gallio*, one that never cares for any of thoſe things, *Acts* xviii. 17. So much Religion as the World will allow him, but no more: *His heart goes after his covetouſneſs*, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. As a man, that's full, may be he will taſte upon the point of the knife ſome dainties, but he cannot feed. C

III. This Fulneſs begets a readineſs to renounce Religion when it comes to the tryal. The Ground that received the ſeed for a time, withered; *in time of Perſecution they fall away*, Mark iv. 17. What Satan falſly ſurmiſed of *Job*, 'tis true of every worldly man, *He will not ſerve God for nought*, Job i. 9. As long as God makes an hedge about him, and bleſſes his ſubſtance, he will own Religion: but touch or take away all that he hath, and he will *curſe God to his face*. When Religion calls one way, and the World calls another, farewel Religion. Thus *Judas*, when he ſaw nothing but oppoſition encreaſing, the ſuppoſed Kingdom went not forward; Chriſt talked of the Croſs and Perſecution, that makes *Judas* turn Apoſtate and Traytor. So *Demas* ſaw the world went another way, forſook *Paul*. The young man in the Goſpel, when Chriſt told him of parting with all, gave over Chriſt; if Heaven be ſo dear, and Religion coſt ſo much, 'tis no peny-worth for him. A worldling deals with Religion, as the men of *Keilah* would have done with *David*, they entertained him for a while, but when *Saul* purſued him, they were reſolved to betray him, they would come into no danger or trouble for him. Thus this D E

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A Fulneſs it will breed Atheiſm *in cultu*, diſpoſe to Apoſtaſie, and make a man abandon all, rather then forſake the World.

Thirdly, There is yet a third denial of God that this Fulneſs diſpoſes to, and that's *in officiis imperatis*, when we perform not thoſe duties which are teſtimonies of our acknowledging him. And this though it be not expreſs and open Atheiſm, yet 'tis an implicit, virtual, interpretative Atheiſm and Denial. As there be many wayes of denying our Allegiance to our King; not onely by open diſclaiming of his Soveraignty, but by many other undutiful practiſes that the Law counts Treaſon: So in this caſe, when the World fills up our hearts, B it breeds a virtual, tacite, ſecret denyal of God, which God accounts as ill, as open Apoſtaſie. A man may make a very ſpecious profeſſion of God, but by a cloſe, ſecret conveyance, renounce and deny him. There may be *proteſtatio contraria facto*, as the Lawyers ſpeak, and *Paul* expreſſes it, *Tit.* i. 16. *They profeſs they know God, but in works they deny him.*

Now this kind of denyal of God, Riches and Fulneſs tempts us to in ſeveral kinds.

I. The firſt kind of this denyal of God is forgetfulneſs of him; when we ſuffer the awful remembrance of him to vaniſh out of our C hearts. We may retain the notional remembrance of him in our heads, and yet loſe the awful remembrance of him in our hearts: and a glut and fulneſs of the World diſpoſes us to it.

1. God forewarns his people of it, *Deut.* vi. 11, 12. *When thou ſhalt have eaten and be full, then beware, leſt thou forget the Lord.*

2. God complains of this as the cauſe of his peoples forgetting him, *According to their Paſture ſo were they filled, they were filled*, Hoſ. xiii. 6. *Their hearts were exalted, therefore they have forgotten me.* Thus *David* ſhews that plenty breeds oblivion of God, and ſcarcity awakened them; *They forgot his works and his wonders that* D *he had ſhewed to them; but when he ſlew them, then they beſought him, and they remembred that God was their rock*, &c. *Pſal.* lxxviii. 34. The love of the World hath a ſtrange power to put out the thought and remembrance of God, as light of the Sun puts out the Candle: ſo will the World extinguiſh the light of knowledge that God hath enkindled in us. Thus *David* deſcribes a wicked worldling: *God is not in all his thoughts*, Pſal. x. 14.

II. A ſecond kind of denyal of God which Fulneſs will occaſion, is the denyal of ungrateſulneſs. Unthankfulneſs is a denyal of God to be the Fountain and Original of our Riches and abundance. E It aſcribes not our Wealth to his Bleſſing, makes not him the Author of our Portion, *Deut.* viii. 17, 18. God forewarns his people of this perilous conſequence upon their abundance: *Beware thou forget not the LORD---and thou ſay in thine heart, My power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth: remember, 'tis He that gives thee power to get riches.* And ſo, *Hoſ.* ii. 8. God charges this ſin upon the *Iſraelites*; *She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl,*

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and multiplied her ſilver and her gold. See the diverſe ſpirit in a worldling, and a pious man in this point. *Gen.* xxxiii. *Eſau* he ſpeaks of his wealth, and *Jacob* of his; *Eſau*, verſ. 9. acknowledges his abundance, *I have enough*; but *Jacob*, what ſaith he? verſ. 11. *Becauſe God hath dealt graciouſly with me, and I have enough:* Both had enough, but *Eſau* looks not up to God, as *Jacob* doth. 'Tis that, which *Habakkuk* condemns in the Wicked, *Chap.* i. 16. *They ſacrifice to their own net, and burn incenſe to their drag, becauſe by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.* *Job* calls this the kiſſing of their own hand, *Chap.* xxxi. 27. They Lord it like *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. iv. 30. *I have built it by the might of my power*; like that *Dragon* in *Nilus* the King of *Egypt*, that ſaid, *Ezek.* xxix. 3. *My River is mine own, I have made it for my ſelf.*

III. A third kind of denyal of God, which Fulneſs tempts us to, is the denyal of dependance; when our plenty and abundance makes us conceit our ſelves to be ſufficient in our ſelves, and that we need not depend upon God. As *Hezekiah*, when he was ſtrengthened in his Kingdom, revolted from the King of *Aſſyria*, would not acknowledge any dependance upon him, 2 *King*, xviii. 7. This is the temptation of a glut of the World, it makes us ſay in our hearts to God, *I have no need of thee*; we can maintain our ſelves, ſtand upon our bottom, ſubſiſt of our ſelves. This God obſerves in that proud King of *Aſſyria*, that boaſted himſelf againſt God, *Eſa.* x. 15. *As if the Ax ſhould boaſt it ſelf againſt him that heweth therewith; or the Saw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhakes it; or the Rod ſhake it ſelf againſt him that lifts it up, or the Staff ſhould lift up it ſelf, as if it were no wood.* Fulneſs will puff a man, not onely to think himſelf Independent of all other men, but even of God himſelf. Emptineſs, that makes us look up to God, and depend and wait upon him; but Fulneſs never owns him, he can do well enough without God. Like the Prodigal, when he had got his Portion in his own hands, then farewel Father, he needs no longer be at his Fathers finding, go to him for every thing.

IV. A fourth denyal of God which Fulneſs will breed, is a denyal of obedience, a refuſal to ſubmit to him and his holy Commands. And who ſo refuſes him, doth as good as in plain terms deny him. This was *Pharaohs* denyal of God, *Exod.* v. 2. when God commanded him to releaſe the *Hebrews* out of Bondage; What ſaith he? *Who is the* LORD, *that I ſhould obey his voyce, and let* Iſrael *go? I know not the* LORD, *neither will I let* Iſrael *go.* And is not this the temper of the great Ones of the World? That whereas poor men oft-times ſubmit, *Prov.* xviii. 23. *The poor man uſes entreaties, but the rich anſwers roughly*: ſnuffs at Gods Command, oppoſes, rejects them: *Let us break his bonds aſunder, and caſt away his cords from us*; Pſal. ii. 3. This *Moſes* reproves in *Iſrael*, Deut. xxxii. 15. Jeſurun *waxed fat, and kicked, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation.* This Fulneſs makes us conceive our ſelves free from controll. Pſal.

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A xii. 4. *Our lips are our own, who is* LORD *over us?* It tempts us to a lawleſs, licentious flinging off Gods Word and Will, that it can take no place with us at all.

V. There is a fifth denyal of God; in withdrawing our truſt and confidence in God, and placing it in our ſelves, and in our abundance. And to this, Fulneſs makes us prone. Thence thoſe that are full of the World, are deſcribed to be they that truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches, *Pſal.* xlix. 6. Saint *Paul* forewarns rich men of this evil; *Charge them that are rich that they truſt not in riches, but in the living God,* 1 Tim. vi. 17. This is
B the main bane of Riches; for this eſpecially is covetouſneſs called Idolatry, *Col.* iii. 5. becauſe men truſt in them, and that inordinately, as counter-means againſt God; not ſubordinately, as under-means to God. As confidence in God is one of the greateſt acknowledgments of God: ſo to rely on riches is one of the greateſt denyals of God; and is, ſaith the Apoſtle, the worldly mans Idolatry. So that we may invert the words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Their Idols are ſilver and gold*, and ſay, Silver and gold are their Idols, in thoſe they truſt. This is a main denyal of God, as *Job* ſpeaks, clearing himſelf from this ſin eſpecially, *Chap.* xxxi. 24, 28. *If I have made gold my hope, or*
C *have ſaid to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; Oh! then I ſhould have denyed the God that is above.* Tell a rich man of truſting in God, he laughs at you, and derides any confidence, but in his purſe: They mock at thoſe that talk of any other confidence then in their Subſtance; *Ye have ſhamed*, or ſcorned *the counſel of the poor, becauſe the* LORD *is his refuge*, Pſal. xiv. 6. They laugh at that ſafety, *He truſted in God, let Him deliver him.*

Vidimus periculum divitiarum. Thus we have ſeen the danger of Riches; now comes,

Secondly, The particular Motive that ſtirs him up to pray againſt
D Poverty, the danger he forecaſts in that eſtate. What's that? Poverty hath many inconveniencies. 'Tis an eaſie thing to furniſh our ſelves with reaſons to pray againſt it.

Firſt, Want it ſelf is a great Motive; to be deſtitute of thoſe ſuccours and comforts that our life ſtands in need of.

Secondly, Contempt is another attendant upon Poverty; and to an ingenuous nature 'tis very grievous to be deſpiſed, and vilified. Stand thou here, or ſit under my foot-ſtool; *Jam.* ii. 3. *I am poor, and deſpiſed*, ſaith *David*; *A poor mans good parts are deſpiſed*, Eccleſ. ix. 16. *David* prays againſt that, *Make me not a ſcorn.*

E *Thirdly*, Neceſſity of ſeeking relief of others, that's a great burthen to ſome; *To beg I am aſhamed*, Luk. xvi. 3. It makes us become ſuiters to others, and that's grievous to an ingenuous diſpoſition. *Moleſtum verbum eſt, & oneroſum, & dimiſſo vultu dicendum*, Rogo. *Sen. The borrower is a ſervant to the lender*, Prov. xxii. 7. much more the beggar. He is at the command of him that relieves him. *Qui dat, ſuperiorem ſe putat.* Hier.

Serm. V.

Fourthly, *Poverty* makes a man obnoxious to any injury, ſubject to oppreſſion, unable to withſtand wrongs; As Grounds without Fences lie open to any Beaſts. They grind the faces of the Poor. All theſe are great inconveniences. Yet this Holy man overlooks all theſe, can digeſt them well enough if God call him to poverty. That which moſt troubles him, is the ſinful temptations that Poverty brings with it, and they are *two*; A

I. An unlawful ſupply of his neceſſities, by the ſin of Stealing.

II. An impious pleading for himſelf, and out-facing his Theft by taking the name of God in vain. The Jews, coming Poor out of *Babylon*, held it no great ſin to ſteal for ſupply of their neceſſities, and then to forſwear themſelves for the better hiding of their Theft. B Therefore,

I. He fears *Theivery*.

II. He fears too, leſt that ſhould occaſion and uſher in a worſe ſin, *Forſwearing* and *Perjury*.

I. The firſt danger he prayes againſt, is the temptation to Theft; and that (taken in the ſtricteſt terms) is a ſecret cloſe putting to our hand to our neighbours goods, the withdrawing and taking them away without their allowance, and applying them to our own uſe. A ſin,

1. Expreſly forbidden in the Law of God, not onely in the Judicial Law, but in the Moral Law, the Law of Nature. C

2. 'Tis not forbidden by way of conſequence and deduction, as ſome ſins are, (as the ſins of Drunkenneſs, Inceſt, Uſury, Oppreſſion) but 'tis ſet in the front of the Commandment in Text-Letters. There needs no expounding, or proving of it from the Commandment; but at firſt ſight ye read it in the Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*.

3. 'Tis not onely forbidden in the Law, but the Goſpel; that forbids it, that enforces that Commandment; *Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more*, Epheſ. iv. 28.

4. 'Tis forbidden in the dreadfulleſt manner, upon the peril of Damnation, 1 *Cor.* vi. 10. *Thieves ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*; 1 Theſſ. iv. 6. *Let no man defraud his brother, becauſe God is the avenger of all ſuch.* In the fifth Chapter of *Zechary* we read of a Book full of Plagues and Curſes which ſhall cleave unto the Thief, and enter into his houſe. The book is large, twenty cubits long, and ten cubits broad, 'tis full of Curſes even from one end to the other: it ſhall come ſwiftly upon him, for 'tis a flying Book; it ſhall bring a fire with it, to conſume his whole ſubſtance, and without Repentance, prepare unto the fire of Hell. D

'Tis a ſin utterly unlawful, take it in the moſt excuſable way that can be. If any Theft be lawful, theſe Pleas may ſeem reaſonable. E

(1.) 'Tis *mihi neceſſarium*, I ſteal for neceſſity and no more, to relieve my charge, to maintain life. That's the tolerableſt kind of Theft that may be, and they that are guilty of it, are moſt to be pitied, Prov. vi. 30. *Men do not deſpiſe a Thief, if he ſteal to ſatisfie his ſoul when he is hungry*; but yet, if he be found, he muſt ſmart for it, *verſ.* 31. the

Law

A Law layes hold on him. No neceſſity can make any ſin warrantable. If thou mayeſt ſteal to ſave thy life, then thou mayeſt forſwear to ſave thy life. "Nay, ſaith S. *Auguſtine*, thou mayeſt not tell a Lye to "ſave thy life, much leſs ſteal. 'Tis neceſſary thou ſhouldeſt not ſin, 'tis not neceſſary that thou ſhouldeſt ſteal.

(2.) 'Tis *proximo ſuperfluum*, that's a ſecond Plea; I rob not the Poor, I ſteal not from a Needy man, but from him who may well ſpare it, he is never the poorer for it. No, not this Plea can make it warrantable. God takes order not onely to ſecure the Poor, but the rich mans eſtate. *David* in his neceſſity durſt not lay his hand
B upon *Nabals* abundance, but ſent and ſued to him for ſupply of his wants.

(3.) 'Tis *in ſe parvum*: The thing I ſteal, it is in it ſelf but ſmall, of no great value or moment, and *parvitas materiæ* may make it venial. 'Tis but the breaking of an hedge, or taking a little corn out of the ſheaf, &c. No, no, the ſmallneſs of the matter, if valuable by thy neighbour, cannot excuſe thee. There is *magna injuria*, though not *magnum damnum*; the Injuſtice is great, though the damage be not. Say then, *Parva res, parva res eſt*; yet *in re parva infidelem eſſe, magnum eſt*: to deal falſly in a little, is no little ſin. Defrauding of the
C Prieſt in *Mint* and *Anice* no great damage, but yet the Phariſees made conſcience of it. And Chriſt tells them, they are bound to do it. Gods Law *curat de minimis*: the prohibition about the Birds neſt, the ſmalleſt Commandement, yet ſtrictly enjoyned, *Deut.* xxii. 6.

(4.) *Pauperibus irrogandum.* The Rich ſhould beſtow theſe helps upon us; we take but what the Law of Charity bindes them to give. True, and yet this will not excuſe thee. The Rich are bound to relieve the Poor, and bleſſed is he that doth it, and curſed are they that are hard-hearted and mercileſs. But yet it warrants not thy taking without his allowance. Becauſe he is unmerciful, thou muſt not be un-
D righteous. Suppoſe it were due to thee, yet thou muſt not take it till he give it thee.

(5) 'Tis *ex voto reſtituendum*, that's a fifth Plea; I will make him ſatisfaction, I mean to reſtore it when God ſhall enable me. That's ſomewhat indeed, but neither doth this allow thee to ſteal. Satisfaction makes it not to be no ſin, but to be a pardonable ſin, for which thou mayeſt find mercy. Satisfaction, if it be forced upon thee, is a puniſhment for ſin; if it be voluntary, 'tis a condition and means for remiſſion of ſin, but no excuſe for it.

So then, in that this Holy man prayes againſt the ſin of Theft, here
E are three truths ſuppoſed:

[1.] The firſt truth ſuppoſed is, (*Leſt I ſteal*) that there is *nulla communitas*. We live not here in a community of all things: All mens goods are not common to all. There is a diſtinction and propriety, that God hath given in *ſeverals* to mens Eſtates and Poſſeſſions, and to every man a proper, ſpecial, perſonal Right in his Lands and Goods. If it were not ſo, there could be no place for Riches and Poverty.

Serm. V.

verty. If all things were common, all would be alike; then which equality, nothing is more unequal. There would be little induſtry. If mens Goods and Lands were not their own, who would be found to take care of them, or beſtow any pains about them? There would be no ſuch thing as ſtealing and thieving. That which is every mans, any man may take and be blameleſs. A man cannot ſteal that which is his own already. A

But God hath not turned us into Common, Catch that catch can, as if Occupancie were the onely good Title and Tenure in the world. *He hath divided to the Nations their inheritance*, Deut. xxxii. 8. *He hath determined to all Nations of men the bounds of their habitation*, Acts xvii. 26. B

True, may ſome ſay, in the times of the Law, God apportioned to every man his ſeveral poſſeſſion; but yet two times are ſuppoſed when all things were common:

1. In the ſtate of Innocency: that, they ſay, ſhould have been a ſtate of Community. *Meum* and *Tuum*, theſe Poſſeſſive words came in afterwards. Nay, verily, if that Command, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*, be moral, (as certainly it is) then it was given to *Adam* in Innocency. And ſo, had he and his poſterity continued in innocency, they muſt have kept it. The Law that taught *Adam* Theft was a ſin, taught him this truth, that ſeveral men ſhould have ſeveral poſſeſſions. C

2. A ſecond eſtate that is pretended, is the ſtate of the Goſpel. That (ſay the Anabaptiſts) broke down all Fences, laid open all inclofures, made all level and common. *Acts* ii. 44. The Diſciples had all things common. True, they had ſo; but not by a legal community, but by a charitable communication. Let thy Fountain be thine own, but yet let the waters run over and be diſperſed in the ſtreets. S. *John* forbids Publicans and Souldiers to wrong men in their Eſtates, Luke iii. 14. *Do violence to no man*, &c. Our Saviour, *Luke* xii. allowed Poſſeſſion in the two brethren who came to him to divide their Eſtate. And he who bad them, Sell, and give to the poor, ſuppoſed that they poſſeſſed all, and the poor had no title to it, but upon gift and charity, Luke xii. 33. *Sell, and give:* They are the words of propriety; they ſtrengthen poſſeſſion, while they command a charitable contribution. And God hath ſet the eighth Commandment as an hedge (and keeps it up at this day in full force and ſtrength) as a fence to every mans poſſeſſion: and he that goes about to break the hedge, a Serpent ſhall bite him, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Eccleſ.* viii. 10. D E

[2.] There is yet a ſecond truth implied in the Motive, *Leſt I ſteal.* Why? *Agur* was an Holy man, a child of God, an heir of the promiſes, juſtified, and adopted, had not he right to all things, a juſt Title to the Creatures? might not he challenge them as his own without ſtealth or uſurpation? No verily. He plainly confeſſes this truth. Had he taken the poſſeſſions of another man violently, it had been

theft

A theft and injuſtice in him; he had no title, or claim to them. And this is *Propoſitio prægnans*: There is a double Truth in it.

1. Had the Poſſeſſour been a wicked man, yet he had right and title to them.

2. Though *Agur* be an Holy man, yet he had no juſt warrant or title to claim them.

1. A wicked mans title to theſe temporal things is good and warrantable. They are not meer Uſurpers, neither ſhall they be proceeded againſt at the laſt day as meer Uſurpers, but they are lawful Owners and Poſſeſſours. 'Tis a true Maxim in Divinity,
B *Dominium temporale non fundatur in gratia.* God, as he is the God of Nature, by common providence allotts to the Sons of men their lawful poſſeſſions, and that to the wicked. He that gave *Canaan* to *Jacob*, gave *Mount-Seir* to *Eſau*. *Iſaac* had his bounds, and *Abimelech*, an Heathenish King, had his; both enjoyed a peaceable poſſeſſion. Heark Saint *Auguſtine*: *Sunt bona, quæ Deus dat inimicis ſuis; ſunt alia, quæ ſervat ſolis amicis. Externa omnia permixtè data ſunt, & bonis, & malis.* And we read of *Abraham*, that he bought a burying-place of the ſons of *Heth*, he doth not challenge it; and *Jacob*, corn of the *Egyptians*. By which they did acknow-
C ledge that theſe wicked men and Idolaters had a lawful title to thoſe temporal things. Neither did we ever read of any of the Saints and Servants of God, that *ſub titulo gratiæ*, did *involare in bona impiorum*, or did *novum aliquid jus temporale ſibi vendicare.*

But is the title of wicked men as good as ever it was? No verily, there is a flaw in it. We all forfeited our right in *Adam*, and every wicked man lies under that forfeiture. But Gods patience forbears him. His forfeiture is not ſued out, nor a Writ of Ejection brought againſt him; and ſo he is *bonæ fidei poſſeſſor*, he is lawfully poſſeſſed of them. As a Felon, though he hath forfeited his life and
D goods to the Kings Juſtice, lyes at his mercy; and till he ſues out his pardon, he is ſtill ſubject to ejection when the King pleaſes: but yet while the King forbears him, his poſſeſſion is good and lawful, and no man may diſturb him. A wicked man hath as much right to his goods, as he hath to his life; he hath forfeited that to God: and till he be reconciled to God, the forfeiture is not forgiven him: Yet for all this, 'tis lawful for him to live, and no man may ſlay him. That's the firſt Propoſition.

2. A ſecond Propoſition: *Agur*, though a Saint, yet hath no Title or claim to another mans goods. It had been theft in *Agur*
E to have uſurped them. 'Twas no Divinity in Saint *Pauls* time, that the Saints had right and title to the goods of the Wicked. He tells of ſervants that were Chriſtians, and their Maſters but Infidels, and yet gives them charge not to be Purloyners, *Tit.* ii. 10. It had been pilfering and ſtealing in Chriſtians, to take even from Pagans and Infidels.

So then Chriſtianity doth not entitle us to the goods of other men.

Serm. V.

men. It makes not Theft to be no Theft in Chriſtians; no lawful poſſeſſion to be uſurpation in an Heathen or Infidel. But yet Chriſtianity doth better our title to the things which we poſſeſs, and that in a threefold reſpect. A

(1.) *Reſtituit.*
(2.) *Corroborat.*
(3.) *Sanctificat.*

(1.) *Reſtituit.* It makes up the breach in our Original Patent and Charter, by which we hold the things of this life. By the fall of *Adam*, and by our own wickedneſs, we forfeited Gods Primitive donation of our right in the Creatures. But Chriſtianity ſues out our pardon, obtains a releaſe of our forfeiture, ſets us *in ſtatu quo*, cancels our former Bond that was forfeited. B

(2.) *Corroborat.* Chriſtianity doth not onely reſtore, but ſtrengthens our title, makes it firmer and better to us. Our eſtate is aſſured and entailed to us in Chriſt. That gives us a more honourable and ſtronger title. We held before in baſer Tenure, as it were, in Villanage, now we hold *in Capite.* Chriſt is our Head, and in him we hold it, 1 *Cor.* iii.

(3.) *Sanctificat.* Chriſtianity ſanctifies and makes our title and uſe of all Creatures more comfortable to us. It removes the curſe and poiſon ſin brings upon them, ſo that we can uſe them with a clean conſcience, and with aſſurance of comfort in them. It ſpeaks to us in *Solomons* language, *Go thy way, Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry heart; for God now accepts thy works.* Indeed Gods Providence is over all; *ſed curam ſibi Eccleſia vendicat*, ſaith *Bernard.* His main care is for the houſhold of Faith. Saint *Paul* tells us, that God hath created theſe comforts to be received with thankſgiving of them which believe and know the truth. This more eſpecial Providence of God, made *David* ſay, *A little that the righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked*, Pſal. xxxvii. 16. A good Chriſtian with a little Eſtate, may have more pleaſure, feel more comfort, ſee more of Gods bounty and mercy, then a man of vaſt Poſſeſſions, whoſe heart cannot lift it ſelf above the Earth. C D

[3.] A third Truth obſervable in that *Agur* prayes againſt this ſin of ſtealing is, that *True Piety will breed true Integrity and Honeſty.* This is the diſpoſition of a true pious man, he is exceeding careful to be injurious to no man. *Agur* begs of God to keep him from this evil of wronging any man, or doing any injury to him. Chriſtianity, it alwayes breeds Innocency. Juſtice and honeſt dealing a Chriſtian makes great Conſcience of. This honeſt dealing puts credit upon Religion, that the Profeſſours thereof are juſt in their dealings. And on the contrary, 'tis a reproach to Religion, that they that will be counted the great Zealots of it, deal falſly, cheatingly, unconſcionably. *Paul* charges Servants to deal juſtly, *that the Goſpel of God be not evil ſpoken of.* The Patriarchs, how were they troubled when they fouud E

the

A the money in their ſacks they brought back again? How confident was *Jacob*, that there was no Thief in his Family, when *Laban* came after him. *With whomſoever thou findeſt thy goods, let him not live*, Gen.xxxi.32.

See the vertue and goodneſs of Chriſtianity touching this point, in three degrees:

1. It makes a man abſtain from doing any injury or wrong to his Brethren. Let him be as bad as can be, Chriſtianity will make him tame and innocent. *Oneſimus* a pilfering runagate, after *Paul* converted him, honeſt and faithful. By the Goſpel the Lyon is made B to feed with the Lamb: no devouring, or deſtroying *in all my holy mountains*. What a ſhame is it for a Chriſtian to be accounted falſe, fraudulent, untruſty?

2. A Chriſtian ſtays not here, not onely forbears to wrong the goods of his neighbour, but is careful to preſerve them. 'Tis a poor commendation for a Chriſtian to be harmleſs. *Parùm ſi ſic, ſed utinam vel ſic, Aug.* And yet it were well if the great Profeſſours of the Goſpel amongſt us were ſuch, not injurious, or fraudulent. But far more is required of them, to wit, that they be uſeful, helpful unto others. *Deut.*xxii.1. *Thou ſhalt not ſee thy brothers Ox, or his Sheep go* C *aſtray and hide thy ſelf from them, thou ſhalt in any caſe bring them again unto thy brother.* How helpful was *Moſes* to reſcue the flock of *Jethro* from the violence of other Shepherds? *Exod.* ii. 17. See this goodneſs in *David* and his followers, though War-like-men, yet no Free-booters nor Plunderers. What a teſtimony do *Nabals* ſervants give of them? 1 *Sam.*xxv.15,16. *The men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither miſſed we any thing as long as we were converſant with them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall unto us, both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the ſheep.*

D 3. A good Chriſtian aims higher yet, he deſires to be beneficial and helpful to others even in his poverty. Chriſtianity gives a poor man a charitable, a merciful heart. The poor widow of *Serepta*, how freely did ſhe relieve *Elijah?* Thus S. *Paul* exhorts, *Eph.* iv.28. *Let him that ſtole ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good.* Why ſo? that he may maintain himſelf and his Family. Nay, *that he may give to him that needeth.* This he highly commends in the *Macedonians*, their poverty did not choak and ſtifle their liberality, but 2 *Cor.*viii.2. *Their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.* Poverty, deep poverty, and yet rich, and abundant E liberality. They imitate Chriſt in this; He was poor, was fain to be relieved, yet he had care to communicate to the poor: Joh. xiii. 29. *They thought he had bid Judas give ſomething to the poor.* The poor widow, *Mark.*xii.42. *threw in her two mites, which was all her living.* This ſhews a right-bred Chriſtian, he will be ſo far from ſtealing and wronging any manner of way, as that he is ready to preſerve; nay, according to his ability, to ſupply the wants of his neighbour.

Serm. V.

We have done with the firſt evil he fears in Poverty, his unlawful ſupply of his neceſſities by ſtealing. A

Secondly, A ſecond evil he fears, that Poverty will bring him to Theft; and then that will tempt him to the denyal and outfacing of his Theft by the ſin of Perjury, *Leſt I take the name of my God in vain.* In it obſerve two things:

I. The ſin it ſelf, that's falſe ſwearing.

II. The aggravation of this ſin, that's in this word, *My God.*

I. Not to enter into any large diſcourſe of this ſin of Perjury, which is a grievous ſin, injurious to God, pernicious to our Neighbour, deſtructive to our ſelves, expoſing us to a curſe, *Zech.*v.4. Obſerve here, by this ſuppoſal of this Holy man, the practice and guile of ſin, 'twill labour to hide and conceal it ſelf, though it be with Perjury. Take it in three gradual corruptions: B

1. *Peccatum velandum*; that's the firſt corruption. The firſt care of a wicked man, is to hide and conceal his ſin. We learned it of our firſt Parents. As ſoon as we have ſinned, then we bethink our ſelves of ſome fig-leaves, run into a thicket, keep our ſins cloſe, beware of diſcovery. We ſit upon them as *Rachel* did upon her ſtolen gods, excuſe and cover them. *Job* makes this one Argument of his integrity, that he did not practice this art of concealment, *Job* xxxi.33. *If I have covered my tranſgreſſion, as* Adam, *by hiding mine iniquity in my boſome.* *Adams* fig-leaves were as ſinful, as his eating the forbidden fruit. *Peccavit in folio*, as well as *in fructu.* We had rather ſtrike the poyſon inwards, then let it break outward in a true confeſſion. Like the *Lacedæmonian* Thief, who having ſtoln a Fox, hid it in his boſom, and let it gnaw out his heart, rather then to bring it forth into open diſcovery. What's this, but to ſave a deformity in the face, to ſtrike the diſeaſe inwardly? and that proves deadly. *He that hides his ſin, ſhall not proſper*, Prov.xxviii.13. C

2. *Peccatum peccato velandum*; that's a ſecond corruption. Sin, rather then it will not be covered, will put on another ſin to hide and conceal it. How doth *David* plot and contrive the concealing of his adultery? Firſt he ſends for *Uriah* home, and commands him to go to his wife. When this took not, he makes him drunk, thinking wine would perſwade him better then words: when neither would do, he murthers him and marries his wife. Oh! a ſinner will dig into Hell to hide his ſin, if it be poſſible. D

3. *Minus majori velandum*; that's a third corruption. A ſinner ſticks not at any ſin that will ſerve to cover it. Perjury, a far more heynous ſin then Theft, and by Gods Law deemed to a more heavy puniſhment. Perjury is a ſin againſt God; Theft againſt our Brother in his goods. A mans name is of more value then his goods; much more is Gods name: how much is that to be preferred before the goods of any man? yet ſee, when ſin is once acted, it will not ſtick at any thing to conceal it ſelf. *Bathſheba's* great belly muſt be concealed with the ſin of murther. Saint *James* ſaith, *He that ſaith,* E

Do

A *Do not commit adultery, saith also, Thou shalt not kill*, Chap. ii. 11. a close insinuation, that Adultery will labour to conceal it self, though it be with Murther. *Ahabs* covetousness must be compassed by the murther of *Naboth*, Prov. i. 19. *Such are the ways of every one that's greedy of gain, he will take away the life of the owners thereof.*

'Tis strange, in other Cases men are more chary and circumspect then to incur greater mischief to escape the less. What should be the inducement to make a man advenure upon perjury to conceal his theft? Conceive these two inducements, such as they be.

1. *Probrosum non probroso velandum.* A sinner counts it great
B wisdom to hide a shaming sin by the overture of another sin that's not so shaming. Stealing, Oh! that's a base, infamous sin, men are ashamed of it; every one points at a Thief, and scorns him: *They cried after* him, *as after a thief*, Job xxx. 5. But the curtesie of the World thinks not so basely of Swearing and Perjury. Gods name may be prophaned, and none cries shame of it. Nay, Oaths serve for Ornaments of Speech among men; he is of a low Spirit that fears an Oath. And here is the choice of the World, rather a great sin then a little shame.

2. *Periculosum non periculoso velandum.* Theft, that's a dange-
C rous sin; if it be detected, it may cost us dear: the Law layes hold of it, it hazards our goods, and lives, and all. But forswearing hath no such penalty; and therefore if an Oath will free us, though it be a false one, we will not stick at it. Here's the preposterous perverseness of the world, to venture upon a sin to escape a punishment; when as religious persons have rather chosen the greatest punishment, then the least sin. It was a worthy Speech of an excellent woman, in Saint *Hierome*, upon the Rack; *Non ideò negare volo, nè peream, sed ideò mentiri nolo, nè peccem. Daniel* chose rather to
D be thrown to the Lions, then to violate his conscience, and so to have a Lion roaring in his bosom.

So much of this sin that he feared: Come we now,

II. To the aggravation *Agur* puts upon this sin of Perjury, *My God*; *To take the name of my God in vain.*

1. 'Tis *vox obligationis*: He is *My God*, by special interest and relation; that's a strong engagement to keep from sin. Say not, *He is my God, therefore I may presume upon him*: but, *He is my God, therefore, I must not, I dare not offend him.* Because he is a God, I will be afraid to provoke him; and because he is Mine, I have interest in him, I will be afraid to forfeit him.

E 2. 'Tis *vox specialis appropinquationis*: This Holy man considering himself in danger, upon the brink of such a downfal as Perjury is, presently he runs nearer and closer to God. As a child scared, or affrighted, runs up close to his Mother; so he runs to God, flies to him, fastens upon him with this word of Affiance, *My God*; as if he had bespoken him in *Davids* words, *O, keep thy servant from this presumptuous sin.* O! 'tis good at all times, but especially in temptations to draw nigh to God.

Serm. V.

3. 'Tis *vox deteſtationis*: He will not unhallow the name of his God, he deteſts the thoughts of it. Let Ruffians ſwear and forſwear by him, they have no intereſt in him; but he is my God I will exalt him. Oh! Let that name be precious to thee. What? ſhall I pawn that precious name, yea, and forfeit it too for every trifle? A Chriſtian hath nothing that's ſo much his own, as his God, and his ſoul. Oh! Adore thy God, and preſerve thy ſoul above all things.

This is that, that makes perjury ſo great a ſin; not onely the falſneſs, but the lewd unhallowing of the Name of God. The Heathen, how careful were they to preſerve the honour of the names of their gods? *Micah* iv. 5. *All people will walk, every one in the name of his god*, &c. Belſhazzar *praiſed the name of his gods, even of wood and ſtone*, Dan. v. 4. Let them be wooden gods, he would not diſhonour them. The Scripture calls the Name of God,

1. *Sacred*; *Holy and reverent is his Name*: then do not prophane it.

2. *Moſes* calls it *the fearful and dreadful name of the* LORD *thy God*; Oh! then tremble and ſtand in aw of it.

3. 'Tis called *jealous*; *His name is jealous*, ſaith *Moſes*. Oh! therefore do not provoke it.

4. 'Tis *vox oppoſitionis*; It implies an oppoſition to the ſpirit of a proud worldling. His ſin is denyal of God. He ſaith, *Who is the* LORD? He knows no other Gods but his full Bags and Abundance. But Poverty, though it hath its temptations, yet it expoſes not to prophane Atheiſm. A poor man can own God more eaſily, and ſooner tremble at him, then the wealthy man puſt up with riches. Poverty can better comply with Piety; 'tis more tractable and teachable, and of more awful apprehenſions of God then the voluptuous or covetous enjoyers of abundance. The ſins of rich men are moſtwhat bold, preſumptuous ſins; *they neither fear God, nor reverence man*: but the poor mans temptations are not ſo daring; he bids not defiance to the knowledge of God.

TWO

TWO SERMONS ON LUKE xii. 4, 5.

And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do:
But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell, yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

IN this Chapter (as in other the Evangelists, that are answerable to it) our Saviour furnishes his Disciples with many Instructions, for the worthy discharge of their function in preaching the Gospel. Especially he commends unto them two gracious qualifications, which will be exceeding requisite for their pious and comfortable performance of that weighty service.

First, He commends unto them the grace and virtue of sincerity, Vers. 1. *Beware of the leven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie.* Indeed a double sincerity is required of them, both of them opposite to Pharisaical leven.

First, Sinceritas Doctrinæ; that they be exceeding careful to preserve the Doctrine of Christ pure, and sincere, and uncorrupted, that it be ἄδολον γάλα as St. *Peter* calls it, *The sincere milk of the Word.* That they believe nothing, teach nothing; but the truth of the Gospel, not mixed, not blended with any false inventions. And then the second is,

Secondly, Sinceritas Conscientiæ; That's another part of sincerity, that is required in this profession of Christianity, that *in singleness of heart, and all godly sincerity*, they may have their conversation in the profession of the Gospel. Yes; these two, sound Doctrine, that cannot be reproved, and a sincere heart, that needs not be ashamed; a good cause, and a good conscience, are necessary requisites, and will prove comfortable supports, whatever may befal us.

Secondly,

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Secondly, Our Saviour having premiſed this uſeful inſtruction, He furniſhes them with a ſecond, that will be exceeding needful and advantageous to them; that's an holy courage and confidence in the courſe of Chriſtianity. The Goſpel is like to breed them enemies, they are to deal with unreaſonable men, that will malign and oppoſe them, yea, vex and perſecute them. Againſt this diſcouragement our Saviour adds this ſeaſonable admonition, *Fear not thoſe that kill the body, but fear him, who* (if you fail in your Duty) *can caſt both body and ſoul into Hell.*

So then, the words I have read unto you, are a ſeaſonable direction, which Chriſt gives to his Diſciples, and in them to all Chriſtians, how to rectifie and order their fear: not to miſplace it, either by fearing what they need not fear; or by ſlighting what they ought to dread and tremble at: not to be like children, play with fire that will burn them, and tremble at ſome mock-fear that cannot hurt them. The malice and miſchief that comes from men, fear not that, ſaith Chriſt; but the wrath and vengeance that comes from God, let that be your fear, be ſure to eſcape that.

In the words we may obſerve three things,

Firſt, Here is a ponderous, and perſwaſive Introduction, and Preface, *I ſay unto you, my friends.*

Secondly, Here is a ſerious Exhortation and Admonition, *Fear not them that can kill the body; but fear him that can deſtroy both ſoul and body, and caſt them into Hell.*

Thirdly, Here is a ſtrong and effectual confirmation of what he hath ſaid to them, *Yea, I ſay unto you, Fear him.*

Firſt, Come we to the Preface and Introduction, in theſe words, *I ſay unto you, my friends.* And we may conſider it in a double apprehenſion:

Firſt, 'Tis weighty and ponderous, that's in theſe words, *I ſay unto you.*

Secondly, Then 'tis ſweet and gracious, in this winning and perſwaſive compellation, *My friends.*

Firſt, 'Tis weighty and ponderous, *I ſay unto you.* 'Tis a form of Speech, which the Scripture uſes in matters of great weight and importance. Thus St. *Paul* ſpeaks to the *Galatians*, to eſtabliſh them in the truth of the Goſpel, from which they were falling, *Chap.* iv. 2. *Behold, I Paul ſay unto you, that if you be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing.* He confirms his aſſertion by a ſtrong aſſeveration, *I Paul ſay unto you.* He owns this weighty Doctrine, and will ſtand to it. So our Saviour, in *Luke* xiii. reproving the uncharitable cenſuring of other mens miſeries, ſeals up his reproof with this ratification, *I tell you nay, but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Thus likewiſe he ſtrengthens his threatning of *Capernaum* for their impenitency, *Mat.* xi. 24. *I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of Judgment, then for thee. Ego dico; verba ſunt* ἀξιωμάτα, of great force and efficacy.

And

A And we may reſolve the ſtrength of this Speech into theſe three expreſſions;

I. Look to the truth of what Chriſt ſaith, and then 'tis a Speech of great aſſurance and certainty, and ſo challenges our full aſſent unto it. It runs in the Style and Language of Infallibility; *Teſte meipſo*, Witneſs our ſelves. The great Doctor and Authour of Truth hath ſaid it: He that is the *Amen*, the true and infallible Witneſs; He, that can neideceive, nor be deceived; he aſſures us of it.

II. Look upon the Text, as it carries with it matter of counſel and advice, whom we ſhould fear, and whom we ſhould not fear, how we B ſhould carry our ſelves in dangers and diſtreſſes, and ſo 'tis a Speech of great fidelity; *I ſay unto you*, the wiſe and faithful Counſellour, he that foreſees our dangers, and tenders our welfare, and forecaſts all the events that ſhall befal us, he gives us this counſel. 'Tis a faithful Speech and advice, a *direction worthy of all acceptation*. That's the ſecond.

III. Look upon the Text, as it contains a ſevere commination and threatning; *Fear him that is able to caſt you into Hell*: and then theſe words, *I ſay unto you*, are a Speech of great power and authority; *I ſay unto you*; I, that am the Sovereign Law-giver and the ſupreme Judge; C I, that will make good all threatnings; I, before whom heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but my word ſhall be fulfilled; I, before whoſe tribunal, both the fearleſs and the fearful, ſhall ſtand and tremble, *I ſay unto you*; and ſo 'tis a Speech of great Power and Authority.

I, the Infallible Doctor,

I, the Faithful Counſellour,

I, the Supreme Judge: that's the weightineſs of the Preface. But then this Preface and Introduction,

Secondly, 'Tis exceeding ſweet and gracious; 'tis expreſſed in this winning, and perſwaſive, and adjuring compellation; *Amici mei*, *My* D *friends*. And it hath many importances in it, it looks divers wayes.

I. This Compellation, *My friends*, it dignifies the Perſons of his Diſciples, ſets an high price and reputation upon them. 'Tis the honor that Faith puts upon us. *Fides, ſervos promovet in amicos*, of ſervants it makes us become friends of God. Good Chriſtians in general, and in ſpecial; they that preach Chriſt, propagate his Goſpel, ſtudy to enlarge and advance his Kingdom, Chriſt counts them his choice friends. *Abraham*, that Holy man, he is termed *The friend of God*, James ii. 23. *John Baptiſt*, who prepared the way for Chriſt in the hearts of the people, was *the friend of the Bride-groom*, Joh. iii. 29. Let the world E account of them as they pleaſe, ſlight them, deſpiſe them, ſet them at naught, a good Chriſtian, a faithful Miniſter, Chriſt ſets highly by them, he accounts and calls them his *deareſt friends*.

II. This Compellation qualifies the counſel, which Chriſt here gives to them. 'Tis the cordial counſel of a loving friend to his beloved friends. There are pretenders of friendſhip in the world, that will give quite contrary counſel to this of Chriſt, and think they do the office of very

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very good friends, in their adviſing of us. "If the times be dangerous, A
"provide for your ſelves, be ſure to hold with the ſtrongeſt party, run
"not your ſelves into hazards and dangers, beware of diſpleaſing thoſe
"that may hurt you. This is the friendſhip and counſel of the world. Such friendly counſel St. *Peter* would be giving to our Saviour Chriſt, when Chriſt tells them what he ſhould ſuffer: *Oh! Maſter*, ſaith *Peter*, *Save thy ſelf, be that far from thee, this ſhall not be unto thee.* What ſaith Chriſt to him? *Get thee behind me Satan*; ſo far was Chriſt from owning him for a friend in this his advice, that he calls him Satan, the name of our great Adverſary and Enemy. Such friends *David* had, that bid him *ſhift for himſelf*, forſake his ſtation and confidence in B
God; they ſaid unto his ſoul, *Flee as a Bird unto the Mountains*, Pſal. xi. 1. And ſuch friends *Nehemiah* had, that bid him withdraw himſelf from the building of *Jeruſalem*, and to take Sanctuary, and hide himſelf. And ſuch kind of friendſhip the *Phariſees* pretended to Chriſt, *Go, get thee out, and depart from hence, for* Herod *will kill thee*, Luke xiii. 31. Such there be, if you liſten to them, that will perſwade us to *chooſe iniquity rather then affliction*, as *Job* ſpeaks: Be ſure to ſleep in a whole skin, though it coſt thee the wounding of a good conſcience. No, that's the trueſt friendſhip that adviſes us to keep and preſerve a good conſcience, perſiſt in our integrity, whatſoever comes of it, prefer the C
favour of God before the favour or friendſhip of the world. 'Tis the trueſt friendſhip to forewarn us of the greateſt dangers, and ſuch above all are ſpiritual hazards; take heed of Hell, incur not the wrath of God, pleaſe not men to the diſpleaſing of God. *Knowing the terrours of the Lord, we perſwade men*; not by the terrours of men, to miſlead and ſeduce them.

III. This Compellation, as it foretels their ſufferings, ſo it acquaints them with the cauſe of them, *My friends, the world will hate you.* God's friends ſhall be accounted the worſt enemies; the world will perſecute them. They muſt look for hard meaſure from the hands D
of Worldlings. *If they hated me* (ſaith Chriſt) *they will hate you alſo*; *if they have perſecuted me, they will perſecute you.* 'Tis a note, by which Chriſt will have his followers and friends known in the world; *Ye ſhall have tribulation*, Joh. xvi. 20. *All that will live godly in this world, ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 Tim. iii. 12. Chriſt forewarns us of it. It was one of the firſt Leſſons he taught St. *Paul*, and ſhewed him how great things he ſhould ſuffer for his Name ſake, *Act.* 9. And St. *Paul* lookt for it. *I know that bonds and impriſonments await me.* As Chriſt taught it him, ſo he taught his Scholar *Timothy* this leſſon: Having given him other directions, he adds this, 2 Tim. iii. 1. *This know alſo*, take this leſ- E
ſon along with you, *In the laſt dayes there will come perillous times, men will be haters of thoſe that are good*; He muſt be partaker of the afflictions of the Goſpel.

And ye ſhall ſee the reaſons of it;

1. There is a ſtrangeneſs 'twixt God's friends, and the men of this world. Chriſt gives this reaſon of the worlds ill uſage of his friends

Sermon I.

A friends and followers: *They are not of the world; if they were, the world would love their own*, Joh. xv. 19. Strangers must look for hard usage. We must not ξενίζεσθαι, saith *Peter*, *Think it strange to suffer as strangers*. God foretold it to *Abraham*, Gen. xv. 13. *Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and they shall afflict them*. *Ezekiel* tells us, 'tis the guise of the world, they *oppress the stranger wrongfully*. Chap. xx. 29. *Mundani, hospitibus feri. Sicut canes ad peregrinos, sic mundus latrat ad insolitam veritatem*. Doggs will bark and fall upon strangers.

2. There is not only a strangeness, but which is more, there is an ha-
B tred and enmity that the world bears to the friends of God. *The Seed of the woman* must look for enmity *from the seed of the Serpent*. God's friends are still esteemed and used as the worlds enemies. And 'tis both causeless hatred, as *David* speaks, *They hate me without a cause*, Psal. xxxv. 7. and 'tis cruel hatred, *They hate me with cruel hatred*, Psal. xxv. 19. 'tis *ad exterminium*, a destructive hatred. *Esai* tells of such, *Your brethren have hated you, and cast you out for my Name sake*. Cast them out, ejected them, rooted them out from their Dwelling; made them to *seek their bread in desolate places*.

3. This enmity, 'tis the worst kind of enmity. The world bears an
C antipathy against God's Servants and Friends. 'Tis an hatred that is planted and rooted in their Nature. Christ tells his Disciples, *I send you as Lambs among Wolves*. There are other Creatures hurtful to Lambs; but none like the Wolf. There's an inbred antipathy 'twixt the Lamb and Wolf. Indeed the antipathy of the Lamb, 'tis but an antipathy of fear; but the antipathy of the Wolf is an antipathy of destruction. It must suck the blood of the Lamb to satisfie its hatred. The Lamb's antipathy is only to shun mischief; but the antipathy of the Wolf is to do mischief. *Solomon* describes such kind of Wolves, though in mens cloathing; *They lay wait for blood, lurk privily for*
D *the innocent, without Cause*, Prov. i. 11.

IV. This compellation, it sweetens to them their sad condition. Christ foretels them of sharp persecutions that do await them; bonds, and imprisonment, yea death and destruction will be their Portion, yet see for all this, He calls and accounts them His Friends. 'Tis a gracious compellation; and serves,

1. To confute the world's apprehension of them.

2. It will answer a shrewd temptation, that may arise in themselves.

1. When the world sees them in this sad condition, hated and
E persecuted, they are ready to pass their hard Censure upon them, they account them forsaken of God, cast out of His care and protection. 'Twas *David*'s case, when he was in distress, his enemies insulted over him; *They said, God hath forsaken him, persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him*, Psal. lxxi. 11. And thus the world judged of Christ himself for His Sufferings. They did esteem him *stricken and smitten of God, and afflicted*, Esai. liii. 4. The

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High Priests mocked Him; *He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him*, Matth. xxvii. 43. Well, let the world think what they please of them, Christ assures them they are near and dear to Him, He esteems and owns them for His beloved friends; *Persecuted they are, but not forsaken.* The enmity of the world may well consist with the amity of God. *He is with them in trouble, He knows their Soul in Adversity*, and doth highly prize them. A

2. As it represses the worlds insultation, so it allayes and answers the poor afflicted Christian man's sad and sorrowful temptation. A Christian is subject to make uncomfortable constructions of his sufferings and afflictions, ready he is to suspect his condition, that all is not well 'twixt God and him, enclined to condemn the *generation of God's children*, and that he himself hath *in vain kept his integrity*. Ye know what *Gideon* said to the Angel, that told him, *God was with him; O my Lord*, said he, *If the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and God hath delivered us into the hands of the Midianites*, Judg. vi. 13. *David* also in his distress, he began to question all those Promises, which God by his Prophets had made unto him, *I said in my haste all men are lyars*, Psal. cxvi. 11. the Prophets have deluded me with false Revelations. 'Tis a sad temptation; but this Scripture here affords us more grace and comfort: It bids us not judge of our spiritual estate and interest in God's love by these outward events; it tells us, God owns us for friends in our worst condition. He is so far from rejecting us in our calamities, that then especially he sets his love upon us. *I have chosen thee in the fornace of affliction*, saith God to his People, *Esa.* xlviii. 10. All this fire is but to refine us, not to consume us. St. *Augustine* makes the Question; "What? saith "he, were those three Worthies in *Daniel*, whom he did deliver from "the fiery fornace more dear to God, then those seven Worthies in "the *Macchabees*, whom he did not deliver; but suffered them to "be slaughtered by their cruel enemies? No, in no wise; in a divers "dispensation there was the same loving affection to both sorts of "them. B C D

V. This compellation, *My friends*, hath another importance. He cals them friends, and withal bids them take heed of Hell and Damnation. It may seem somewhat strange, that Christ should threaten Hell and Damnation to those whom he loves and accounts his Friends. What? the friends of God, are they in the danger of eternal perdition? Indeed some titular and nominal relations there may be 'twixt God and us, and yet we may miscarry for all that. The man without the *wedding garment*, Matth. xxii. *that was cast into utter darkness*, hath the courtesie of this Language afforded him, *Friend, how cameſt thou hither, not having a Wedding Garment?* And you know what passed 'twixt *Abraham* and *Dives*, when he was in Hell; *Father Abraham*, said the damned rich man; and, *Son, remember*, said *Abraham* to him: words of relation, but not of affection. And so Christ bestow'd the courtesie of calling *Judas*, *Friend*, when he came to betray Christ, E

Matth.

A *Mat.* xxvi. 50. *Friend, wherefore art thou come?* But theſe, whom Chriſt owns here for his friends, were not nominal, but his real and cordial friends, loving him, and beloved of him, and yet he forbears not to tell them, that, if they look not the better to it, they may incur damnation. 'Tis worth our obſerving, and laying to our heart; That, *Not only the Promiſes of Salvation belong to good Chriſtians, but they are concerned in the threatnings of damnation*; they are not ſet out of the reach and poſſibility of Hell, if they do wilfully fail of their Duty.

Theſe two Aſſertions are moſt true; *If a wicked man repent, and turn to God, he ſhall be pardoned*; and this is as true, *If a righteous man*
B *forſakes his righteouſneſs, and fall from God, he ſhall be condemned.* And 'tis great love in Chriſt to warn us of it. 'Tis a good ſaying of the Father, *Deus non ſolùm bene faciens, ſed comminans bonus eſt.* We are *tuti, ſi cauti; ſecuri, ſi attoniti.* 'Tis a great act of friendſhip to forewarn us of Hell. Many had never held on in the way to Heaven, but for theſe threatnings, and terrours, and fear of Hell. O, 'tis good to nouriſh theſe thoughts in us, not to think Hell-fire is already quench'd, it cannot ſcorch us. What ſaith *Job? Deſtruction from the Almighty made me afraid.* And St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, *Let us have grace to ſerve God with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a conſuming fire,*
C Chap. xii. 28. Indeed, a good Chriſtian will make uſe of both; both of the promiſes of Heaven, and the threatnings of Hell. *Ama bonitatem, time ſeveritatem*, as *Paul* expreſſes it. *Behold*, and lay to heart, *both the goodneſs and ſeverity of God; His goodneſs, if thou continue in his goodneſs, otherwiſe thou ſhalt be cut off*, Rom. xi. 22.

We have done with the Preface and Introduction; Come we now,

Secondly, To the Admonition; And that we ſee is twofold,

Firſt, 'Tis Negative, ſhewing us whom we ſhould not fear, *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they*
D *can do.*

Secondly, 'Tis Poſitive, ſhewing us whom we ſhould fear; *But I will forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell.*

Firſt, Let us conſider the Negative part: and in it two things;

I. The prohibition of the affection, *Be not afraid.*

II. Then here is the repreſentation of the dangers, which we muſt not fear; And that's expreſſed,

1. In the aggravation of it, *Such as kill the body.*

2. In the extenuation of it, *They have no more that they can do.*
E Though they *kill you, fear them not*; though they do their worſt, *Be not afraid* of them; that's the aggravation of the danger: then they can but kill you; more, or worſe, they cannot do; therefore fear them not; that's extenuation of the danger.

I. Let us conſider the affection prohibited, *Be not afraid.* Chriſt here puts a law and a reſtraint upon our fear. Now ſurely, of all the affections, that are planted in our Nature, fear, and the errours ariſing

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from fear, are the moſt excuſable and pardonable; eſpecially, when our fear makes us ſhun, and ſtrive to avoid ſome great miſchief, as this is in the Text, the loſs of our lives. Indeed, ſins out of delight and pleaſure to make a paſtime of ſinning, or bold, and audacious, and preſumptuous ſins, ſuch we all yield are worthily puniſhed: but for a man to fail in his duty, upon the ſurpriſal of fear, leſt he ſuffer ſome great loſs or miſcarriage, we hope that will find favour, and be excuſed. *Saul* pleaded that in excuſe of his diſobedience; *I feared the people, and obeyed their voyce*, 1 Sam. xv. 24. The people might have mutined, if he had not yielded to them. No, ſee here the irregularities and exorbitances of our fear, are here prohibited. This Plea will not hold at Chriſt's Tribunal; "I ſinned out of fear, not willingly, and upon choice, out of mine own inclination; my fear forced me to it. It is ſaid, *Rev.* xxi. 8. the fearful are excluded and ſhut out of Heaven; not only audacious and malicious ſinners, but the timerous and fearful, that betray the truth of God out of fear, theſe have their *portion in the Lake of fire and brimſtone*, Verſ. 8.

Not that all fear of miſchief from evil men is unlawful. God allows us this affection of fear in caſe of dangers, and to provide againſt them.

1. We may fear miſchievous men ſo far, as not to provoke them, not to give them unneceſſary occaſion to offer violence to us. Chriſtian Fortitude, which is the virtue contrary to fear, is not alwayes ſeen *in aggrediendis periculis*, but *in ſuſtinendis*; not by putting our ſelves into dangers, but in a Chriſtian enduring of them, when they fall upon us. The Eccleſiaſtical Story tells us of a raſh unadviſed Chriſtian, that plucked down and defaced the Emperours Edict that was publiſhed againſt Chriſtians, for which when he ſuffered death, the Church would not account him among the Chriſtian Martyrs. An unwarrantable boldneſs, in provoking of the Enemies, made him uncapable of the honour of Martyrdom. In the judgment of the Church, he ſuffered as an evil doer, and not as a Martyr.

2. We may fear them ſo far forth, as to ſhun and avoid them. Chriſt adviſes us to be *wiſe as Serpents* in this ſenſe; to keep out of harms way, to do our beſt to ſecure our ſelves from hurts and miſchiefs. We muſt not εἰκαιοκινδυνεῖν, ruſh upon perils. *Solomon* ſaith, *A wiſe man foreſees a danger*, and will do his beſt to avoid it. That Speech of our Saviour is remarkable, *Luke* xvii. 33. *Whoſoever ſhall ſeek to ſave his life*, by ill wayes, *ſhall loſe it; and whoſoever ſhall loſe his life, ſhall preſerve it.* He doth not ſay, *Whoſoever ſhall ſeek to loſe his life, thruſt himſelf upon danger*; but, *Whoſoever ſhall loſe it for Chriſt's ſake, ſhall ſave it.*

So then,

1. We may be careful to avoid them. 'Tis our Saviour's advice, *Mat.* x. 17. Προσέχετε, *Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to Councels.* The *Stoicks* called this *fear*, *Caution*; they termed it. τὸ λογικὴν ἐκκλισιν βλαβερῶν, the wiſe declining of any hurtful thing.

2. More

A 2. More then ſo; Our Saviour allows flight from them: *Matth.* x. 23. φεύγετε, *flee from them.* Thus the Prophet *Elijah* fled from *Jezabel*'s perſecution; he aroſe and went for his life upon *Jezabel*'s threatnings. And the Prophet *Uriah*, he fled from *Jehojakim*, Jer. xxvi. 21. *David*, when *Saul* perſecuted him, avoided him by flight; and he wiſhed for *the wings of a Dove, to flee away and eſcape from the ſtormy wind and tempeſt*, Pſal. lv. 6, 8. Such an avoidance of danger, though it ariſe from fear, yet it may be guided by Faith, and therefore 'tis aſcribed and imputed to Faith. 'Tis ſaid, *Heb.* xi. 23. that *by faith Moſes was hid by his Parents* from the fury of *Pharaoh*.
B 'Twas fear that made them do it, but ſuch a fear as was ordered by Faith. And again, *by faith Moſes forſook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King.* In *Exodus* 'tis ſaid, *Moſes feared, and fled from the face of Pharaoh*: and yet, becauſe faith directed his fear, St. *Paul* aſcribes his flight to faith, and not to fear. Yea, our bleſſed Saviour, when his enemies aſſaulted him, he hid himſelf from them, *Joh.* viii. 59. He could have withſtood them, *Sed noſtræ infirmitati conſuluit*, ſaith *Auguſtine*, he did it to direct us what we may do in caſe of perſecution.

C 3. Eſpecially we muſt ſo ſhun and avoid dangers, as to pray againſt them. That's a ſanctified fear, that ſtirs us up to Prayer. Thus did good *Jacob*, when he heard of *Eſau*'s marching againſt him, *Gen.* xxxii. 11. he betook himſelf to Prayer: *Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Eſau, for I fear him.* This courſe the Apoſtles took, when they were threatened by the High-Prieſts, *Acts* iv. 24. *They lift up their voice with one accord; O Lord, behold their threatnings.* 'Twas *David*'s practice in all his dangers: *Be merciful unto me, O God, for man would ſwallow me up; they are my adverſaries, but I give my ſelf unto Prayer*, Pſal. cix. 4. This is a lawful and an holy fear; ſo to avoid miſchiefs, as
D to Pray againſt them. That's the ſecond; we may fear them, as to avoid them.

3. We may, nay we muſt fear thoſe that perſecute us, in another ſenſe, not to contemn them, eſpecially if they be our Governours and Superiours, though they oppreſs us, yet we muſt not deſpiſe, revile, or curſe them. *Being reviled, we bleſs; being perſecuted, we ſuffer it*, 1 Cor. iv. 12. The Angels gave no railing accuſation, but ſaid, *The Lord rebuke thee.* Thus St. *Paul* exhorts us, *Render to all their dues; fear to whom fear.* We may learn this of the two Diſciples, that went to *Emmaus*; when they ſpake of thoſe that had crucified Chriſt, they railed
E not on them, but ſpake reverently of them, being their Superiours; *The Cheif Prieſts and Rulers*, ſay they, *put him to death*, Luke xxiv. 20. St. *Peter* bids us anſwer our perſecutors with meekneſs and fear, 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. Thus the Apoſtles in their Prayer againſt the threatnings of the High Prieſts and Elders, they prayed for help againſt them, but not for curſes, or vengeance upon them; *Behold their threatnings, and ſtretch forth thy hand* (not to plague and deſtroy them, but) by heal-

ing,

Sermon I.

ing and merciful miracles, to win, and convert them, *Acts* iv. 30. A

You have seen how far forth we may fear them: the inquiry now must be, how then must we not fear them; take it in three particulars;

1. We must not fear them so far forth as to be dismayed at them. Not to be overwhelm'd with fear, as 'tis said of *Nabal*, when he was told of the danger he was in by *David*'s coming against him, 'tis said, *his heart dyed in him, he became as a stone.* The Book of *Wisdom* calls this fear, *a betraying of the succours, which reason affords*, Chap. xvii. 12. Such a fear, 'tis the wicked man's curse, *Deut.* xxviii. 56. *The* LORD *shall give thee a trembling heart, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life. David*, he over-master'd this fear; *What time I am afraid, do I put my trust in thee*, Psal. lvi. 3. His faith over-ruled his fear, that it was not excessive. So. *Paul* calls it, *not to be terrified by our adversaries*, Phil. i. 28. Not to be ἀπορία, *Luke* xxi. 9. at an utter loss, not at our wits end, not knowing what to do. Our Saviour calls it ἀποψυχόντων ἀνθρώπων, *when mens hearts fail them for fear.* The Apostle shews us the moderation of this fear, 2 Cor. iv. 8. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair.* 'Tis our Saviours advice, μὴ μεριμνᾶτε, not to be distracted with fear, as the *Israelites* were in *Egypt* with sorrow, that they heeded not God's message by *Moses, for the anguish of their spirits, and their cruel bondage.* The Prophet *Esai* exhorts, and encourages us against this fear; *Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Chap. ii. 22. B C

2. We must not fear them so far forth, as to be ensnared by them, and so to be brought off to comply with wicked men in their wicked courses. *Solomon* tells us, 'tis one ill consequent of worldly and carnal fear; *The fear of man brings a snare with it*, Prov. xxix. 25. Fear may betray us into some sinful actions, even against conscience and resolution. 'Twas so with St. *Peter*, he meant well, and purposed well to own our Saviour, and to stick to him; but fear surprized and betrayed him into that great sin of denying his Master. The Book of *Job* calls this *the choosing of iniquity, rather then affliction*, Chap. xxxvi. 21. rather to do ill then to suffer ill. The Prophet *Esai* forewarns us of this ill fruit of fear, Chap. viii. 12. *Say ye not, A confederacy to all them, to whom this people shall say A confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.* How many Christians both in the Primitive, and latter times of the Church, have fallen into the snare, and been caught by it, and yielded their compliance with Pagans and Idolaters, for fear of persecution? *Origen*, and *Marcellinus*, through fear were brought off to Heathenish Sacrifices; *Cranmer* and *Jewel*, forced by fear to sinful subscriptions. These *Austin* calls *flenda naufragia.* Many tall ships have dashed upon this rock, and suffered shipwrack. That's a second, not to fear them, so as to be ensnared by them. D E

3. We must not fear them so far forth as to be disheartned by them from

A from doing our duty. Many, that have not yielded to the former ſuggeſtions of fear to be fetcht into ſome wicked compliances, yet fear hath made them deſiſt, and forbear, and give over the practice of what God hath enjoyned them. Many there have been, who though with *Judas* they would not betray Chriſt, nor with *Peter* deny him, yet have been content with the other Diſciples to withdraw, and forſake him; not publickly to own him, but to ſtand aloof off, not to adhere to him. Such timerous Diſciples Chriſt met with, *Joh.* xii. 42. *Many of the chief Rulers believed on him, but because of the Phariſees they did not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out*
B *of the Synagogue.* Chriſt calls this a *being aſhamed of him*, Mark viii. 38. Take heed of this fear, 'tis a baſhful Devil. This operation of fear hath ſometimes ſurprized the ſervants of God. *Samuel* felt a grudging of it, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 2. when God ſent him to anoint *David*; *How can I go? if Saul hear of it, he will kill me.* This fear tempted *Jeremy* utterly to give over his Prophetical office, but that God encouraged him. And *Ezekiel* ſtood in need of this encouragement againſt the malice of his enemies; *Son of Man*, ſaith God to him, *ſpeak my words unto them, be not afraid of them.* In this caſe, when God requires our ſervice, *Heſter*'s reſolution muſt be ours, *If I periſh, I periſh*: And ho-
C ly *Daniel*'s practice muſt be our Example, he would not deſiſt from worſhipping of God, nor give over his dayly Prayers but for thirty dayes, though it coſt him his life. What ſaid St. *Peter*, when the High-Prieſt threatned him? *Whether we ſhall obey you, rather than God, judge ye.*

We have ſeen the affection prohibited, that's *fear*.

2. Let's ſee the τὸ φόβητρον, the danger that *fear* looks upon, and would avoid. 'Tis not an imaginary danger, ſuch as *Solomon*'s Sluggard forecaſts, *O! there is a Lyon in the ſtreets, I ſhall be ſlain by him*: Nor is it a matter of caſualty, ſuch as every courſe of life is ſubject to,
D but 'tis an intended miſchief from cruel enemies; and ſo ſuch a fear as may fall *in conſtantem virum*; Not to fall into the hands of bloody men, every wiſe man, you will ſay, will fear ſuch a danger. Well, yet our Saviour ſaith, *Fear them not.*

And here we have the danger expreſſed,

1. With the aggravation of it, 'tis no leſs then loſs of life.

2. With the extenuation of it, they can *but kill the body*, more they cannot do. Firſt, though they *kill the body*, let them do their worſt, yet fear them not, that's the aggravation; then they can *but kill the body*, more or worſe they cannot do, therefore fear them not, that's
E the extenuation.

1. Look upon the danger in the aggravation of it, and it hath a a double aggravation;

1. The greatneſs of the danger, 'tis loſs of life.

2. The certainty of it, that's a ſecond aggravation, they do kill, ſuppoſe that, ſo that they ſhall prevail, there is no avoiding it, yet for all that fear them not.

1. Con-

Sermon I.

1. Conſider the greatneſs of the danger. Chriſt fore-warns them not here of ſome leſs annoyances, which Chriſtians muſt look for from the hands of their Enemies, as ſometimes he doth in Scripture. A

1. As hatred, and evil will, *Ye ſhall be hated of all men for my Name ſake*, Mat. x. cauſleſs hatred, ſpiteful hatred.

2. Evil words, reproaches, ſcorns, ſcandals caſt upon them, *Men will ſpeak all manner of evil againſt you*, Matth. v.

3. Hard meaſure, unjuſt uſages and oppreſſions, ſpoiling of their goods, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* x. Theſe are ſharp afflictions, but theſe are not all, nor the worſt that Chriſtians muſt look for in this World. Chriſt foretels them of the loſs of life. Thoſe other ſufferings B
are but *acies novaculæ*, the ſharper edg of the Razor, it makes bare skin, but yet doth not wound us: But the Text tells us of *os gladii*, the dint and piercing of the Sword, the loſs of life, the ſhedding of their blood, bitter malice of man, that proceeds ſo far; that's the greatneſs of it.

2. Then here is the certainty of the danger and miſchief. Chriſt here ſuppoſes the worſt that can come; though you be ſure to die for it, yet fear them not. Chriſt doth not ſay, They will deſire to kill you, lay in wait for blood, ſwear, and vow your deſtruction, as thoſe forty Conſpirators that bound themſelves under a curſe to kill St. *Paul*, but C
yet failed of their purpoſe: No, Chriſt ſets it at the worſt, they ſhall have their will of you, take your lives from you; yet for all this, be of good courage, *Fear them not.* Here, even at this exigent, Chriſtian Faith and Fortitude will caſt out fear.

The Scripture ſometimes ſpecifies ſome leſſer, and ſome lower degrees of Chriſtian Fortitude, and caſting off Fear. And there is, ſaith the Philoſopher, *Fortitudo ob ſpem*; Men may have ſome grounds of hope to eſcape danger, and that makes them not fear it. And we find it in *David*, *I hope and truſt in the Lord, I will not fear what Man can do unto me*, Pſal. lvi. Thus God encourages *Baruc*, tell him *his life ſhall* D
be given him for a prey; hard meaſure he ſhall meet withal, but his life ſhould be ſpared, *Jer.* xlv. So Chriſt aſſured St. *Paul* at *Corinth*; *Fear not Paul, I am with thee, and no man ſhall hurt thee*, Acts xviii. Here Hope caſts out Fear. Then the Philoſopher tells us of another Remedy againſt Fear; that's *Fortitudo ob experientiam*; when we have eſcaped the like dangers before, that makes us fearleſs of other enſuing dangers. And this encouraged *David* in his encounter with *Goliah*: *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lyon, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philiſtine.* Here experience begat courage, and caſt out fear. But theſe E
both, both the hope of future deliverance, as alſo the experience of former deliverance, fell ſhort of that high pitch of Chriſtian Fortitude which Chriſt ſets us here. Though there be no hope of eſcape, our Enemies ſhall prevail, and over-maſter us, and wreak their malice upon us, ſlay and deſtroy us; yet, ſaith Chriſt, *Fear them not.* *Paul* attained to this pitch of Fortitude; when dangers were foretold him, and

Sermon I.

A and he was importuned to avoid them, *What*, ſaith he, *Act.* xxi. *I am willing, not only to be bound, but to die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus.* And we may ſee this fearleſs and couragious Reſolution in thoſe three Worthies in the Book of *Daniel*, when the King threatned to caſt them into the fiery Fornace, if they refuſed to worſhip his Idol. See what an Anſwer they gave to his threatnings, *Our God, whom we ſerve, is able to deliver us, but if he do not deliver us, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not worſhip thy Golden Image.* Here courage did caſt out fear? here Chriſtian fortitude had a perfect work.

B Ye have ſeen the aggravation of the danger, both in the greatneſs and certainty of it; *Though they kill you, fear them not.* Now,

2. Conſider the extenuation of it, they can but kill us, more, or worſe they cannot do, therefore *fear them not.* Indeed to a carnal man, that hath all his portion in this life, 'tis but cold comfort to tell them, their bodies only ſhall be killed, no more ſhall be done to them. Such ſhort-ſighted men, that cannot look beyond this world to an eternal life, kill their bodies, and all is gone and loſt with them; they that live, as if they were all Body, and no Soul, the loſs of this life is an utter undoing to them, all periſhes with them, they look for nothing
C hereafter. But to a good Chriſtian (and bleſſed be God, and bleſſed be that Religion, that aſſures of it) even in death there is this comfort, that our Enemies cannot deſtroy us totally, finally; 'tis not in their power to do more to us. Sure he is a well-grounded Chriſtian, that can make a *but* at Bodily Death, that can ſay with comfort, what the four poor Lepers ſpake in deſpair, 2 *King.* vii. 4. *If they kill us, we ſhall but die.*

And this extenuation ſtands in a double reſtriction of the miſchief they do to us.

I. 'Tis partial, 'tis but the *killing of the body.*

D II. 'Tis finite and ſoon ended, *After that they have no more that they can do.*

I. I ſay 'tis partial, 'tis but the *killing of the body.* And the body,

1. 'Tis *vilior pars*, the meaner and the baſer ſort of man: Our Soul's are more noble and divine. St. *Paul* calls our bodies, *vile bodies*; I, but our Souls are precious Souls: And our Souls be out of our Enemies reach. *There is no man hath power over the Spirit*, ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. viii. 8. *Anima cujuſque is eſt quiſque.* 'Tis the Soul of man, that makes the man. He is happy, whoſe Soul is happy, whatſoever befals
E our bodily life. *Quid agunt, qui moritiment, niſi ut poſteriùs moriantur?* Aug.

2. 'Tis *fragilior pars*; The Body, 'tis the frail and mortal part of man. They kill that which otherwiſe would die of it ſelf; they do but that to thee which Old Age, or Sickneſs, or Caſualty will do. *Quod ſcorpius, aut febris, aut fungus tollent*, ſaith *Auguſtine.* They do no more, then the biting of a Scorpion, or it may be the pricking of a Pin, or the ſhaking of an Ague, or the unwholeſomneſs of ſome Herb may

do to thee. Who would reckon much of that life that is subject to so many miscarriages?

3. 'Tis *pars restituenda*; They take away that which they shall not hold from thee, it shall be restored to thee again. *Non moritur, quisquis victoriâ occiditur*, saith *Hierom*; he is not fully killed that shall live again. That made the Saints not to accept of deliverance, that *they might obtain a better Resurrection*. Let them do their worst, yet not *an hair of your heads shall perish*, Luke xxi. 18. *O, si sic custodiantur superflua tua, in quanta securitate est anima tua!* August. If our hairs be preserved, how safe shall our Souls be! This made *David* for to sing, *Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of the Saints.*

II. As 'tis partial, so 'tis finite; More they cannot do. Not more? Yes, it seems they have more, that they can do, and *David* complains of it, *Psal.* lxxix. 2. *The dead Bodies of thy Servants have they given to be meat unto the Fowls of the Heaven; and the flesh of thy Saints unto the Beasts of the Earth*, not suffered to bury them. So the two Witnesses, *Rev.* xi. nor suffered to be put into Graves. *St. Augustine* removes this scruple, and tells us *David*'s words are no aggravations of the Saints misery, but an exaggeration of the Enemies barbarous and inhumane cruelty.

They can do no more, 'tis true, but they would do more, even destroy Body and Soul too. Such kind of cruelty hath been seen in the World. They would not have those whom they have destroyed, to be accounted Christians, or that they dyed in peace with God. Thus the Pope's Curse must sink men into Hell. And hath there not been Books written to confute the pious departure of some persecuted men, and to dispute them into Hell? A malice beyond the malice of Satan. He scrambled for the dead Body of *Moses*, but knew his Soul was out of his reach. Here is our comfort, *The Souls of the righteous are in the hands of God*, as the Wise-man speaks. *Job* comforts himself with this meditation, *There the Wicked cease from troubling, and there the Weary are at rest, there they hear not the voice of the Oppressor*, Chap. iii. 17.

Luther, Calvin, Beza.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON ON

Luke xii. 5.

But I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell; yea, I ſay unto you, Fear him.

WE have done with the negative part of this admonition, which ſhews us whom we ſhould not fear.

Now let us proceed,

Secondly, To the *poſitive* part, the *affirmative admonition*, that which enjoyns a due and uſeful, and neceſſary fear. That's in theſe words, *Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell.* And this admonition comes not in ſolitary, or alone; but it is uſhered in, and recommended to us by this ſolemn and ſerious Preface, *But I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear.* And theſe words are not words of courſe, ſerving onely to bring in the admonition with more formality; but 'tis a ſerious and ponderous Speech. And we may conceive the purpoſe of it in a threefold notion.

First, Conceive the purpoſe of this Speech, *But I will forewarn you whom ye ſhall fear*, as a juſt exception from the former rule, and neceſſary limitation of our Saviours admonition. In that Chriſt forbids us the fearing of thoſe that may hurt and annoy us, there he exempts us from the fear of men: But then withal he enjoyns us another fear; he doth not prohibit all kind of fear, nor would have us extinguiſh that paſſion and affection in us, but he doth rectifie our fear, teaches us to place it upon the true and proper Object. Be of good courage, fear not men; but then withal take this *proviſo*, be ſure that your fear be ſtill fixed and faſtned upon God.

In general, thoſe affections that are in our ſouls of love and hatred, of joy and ſorrow, of courage and fear, they are not (as ſome would conceive them) an After-growth of noyſom weeds in our corrupted

Serm. II.

nature: but as wholſome herbs implanted in us by God at our firſt creation; and ſo do now ſtand in need of a ſober reformation, not of an utter extirpation and rooting up. Religion doth not nullifie, but ſanctifie our affections, places them upon their proper objects, reduces them to their due and fit moderation, gives us rules and cautions for the holy and religious exerciſe of them. It doth not forbid, but rectifies our joy; it bids us not rejoyce in iniquity, but rejoyce in the truth, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 6. It rectifies our love; *Love not the world, or the things of the world, but let the love of God rule in our hearts.* So here it guides and orders our fear. Fear not the malice of men, but be ſure to fear and tremble at the diſpleaſure of God. Empty thy heart of the fear of men; but repleniſh thine heart with the fear of God. 'Tis the mark of a good man: *The fear of the* LORD *is his treaſure*, Eſa. xxxiii. 6.

VVe are not to live in a fearleſs and careleſs condition. Religion frees us from the fear of our enemies; but doth not diſcharge us from the fear of God. *Chriſtus ablato timore, ſubjecit timorem*, ſaith *Auguſtine*: He forbids us one fear, but enjoyns another. VVe muſt not ſo caſt away fearfulneſs, as to fall into prophaneſs; like him in the Goſpel that profeſſed, *He neither feared God, nor regarded man.*

This holy fear, 'tis a great preſervative of the ſoul from ſpiritual dangers. VVe are *tuti, ſi cauti; ſecuri, ſi attoniti*; ſaith *Tertullian*. Fear makes us circumſpect, and ſo brings ſafety to us. Which made the good Father pray to God to aw him with fear, *that fearing thy threatnings, I may eſcape them.* That's the firſt notion of this Preface, 'tis a juſt and neceſſary limitation.

Secondly, This Speech, *I will forewarn you whom ye ſhall fear*, hath the uſe and force of Direction, teaching us whom we ſhould fear and ſtand in aw of. And ſuch a guidance, 'tis exceeding neceſſary. We all ſtand in need of ſuch direction. Naturally we are prone to imagine many umbrages, and falſe fears to our ſelves; but ignorant we are, how, and upon whom to place our fear aright. As 'tis ſaid of *Laban*, he had his many Deities by whom he ſware, ſome right, ſome wrong; but *Jacob ſware by the fear of his Father Iſaac*: ſo our hearts miſlead us often to falſe objects of fear, which can neither do good nor ill, neither help nor hurt us. We ſtand in need of a guide in this duty. We come into the world as thoſe ſtrangers that came to people *Samaria*; 'tis ſaid, *They knew not the way of the true God, they muſt have ſome to teach them how they ſhould fear the Lord*, 2 King. xvii. 28. 'Tis *David*'s deſcription of wicked men, *They are often afraid, where no fear is.* And ſo, on the contrary, they are regardleſs and fearleſs of him, whom they ſhould dread and tremble at. *God is not in all their thoughts.* As *John Baptiſt* ſpake to the people that came to his Baptiſm, *Quis monſtravit, Who hath ſhewed you to fear, and flee from the wrath to come?* Of our ſelves we know not which way to beſtir our ſelves; we had need turn Diſciples to *David*, *Come ye children*, ſaith he, *hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

VVe

Serm. II.

A We all ſtand in need of the Prophet *Eſai*'s direction, *Chap.* viii. 12. *Fear not their fear, nor be afraid; but let the Lord be your fear, and let him be your dread.* What *Paul* prays for our loving of God, we may well pray for his fear; *The Lord direct your hearts into the fear of God*, he teach you to fear his Name, and to tremble at it. That's the ſecond, 'tis a ſpeech of Direction.

Thirdly, This Speech hath another Emphaſis in it. 'Tis not onely a Caution, but a Precaution; not onely a warning, but a forewarning προμνήσω, *præmonſtrabo*. 'Tis a ſeaſonable warning beforehand, and, that's (if we have grace to make uſe of it) the beſt warning. Not
B like *Dalilahs* warning to *Sampſon*, firſt let him be in the midſt of dangers ſurprized by his foes, and then cry out, and bid him beware, his enemies are upon him. No, that's faithful counſel, to bid us take heed while the danger is yet at a diſtance, and we have time to prevent it, and ſecure our ſelves againſt it. 'Tis our Saviours good counſel. *Mat.* v. 25. *Agree with thine adverſary quickly, while thou art in the way*, e're the Serjeants arreſt thee, and the Judge condemn thee, *and thou be caſt into priſon.* Sue for conditions of peace while thine enemie that comes againſt thee, is a great way off.

This forecaſt and foreſight of dangers is the greateſt wiſdom, eſpe-
C cially in ſuch dangers as are aforehand avoidable, but being once fallen into, are then irrecoverable, as is this in the Text. Whileſt thou art on this ſide Hell, if thou wilt take warning and look about thee now, thou mayeſt eſcape it: but when Hell hath laid hold on thee, redemption from thence is impoſſible, it ſeizes for ever.

Oh! It is good to make timely uſe of theſe forewarnings of Chriſt, not to neglect them. How earneſtly doth God commend this forecaſt and wiſdom to us? *Deut.* xxxii. 29. *Oh! that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their later end!* 'Tis that which the Scripture highly commends in *Noah*, Heb. xi. 7. *By faith Noah, be-*
D *ing warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark for the ſaving of his houſe.* Had he ſtaid till the flood broke in upon the world, there had been no eſcaping. God graciouſly gave him warning, and *Noah* wiſely took warning, and ſo eſcaped deſtruction. The ſlighting and overſlipping of theſe preventing warnings is a ſhrewd ſign, a diſmal forerunner of deſtruction. See how heavy a doom the Prophet paſſed upon the King of *Judah* for ſlighting his warning; *I know God hath determined thy deſtruction, becauſe thou haſt not hearkned to my counſel*, 2 Chron. xxv. 16.

Such gracious forewarnings, if they be deſpiſed, make our ſins
E inexcuſable, our puniſhments moſt heavy and unſupportable. 'Tis a cutting Speech that St. *Paul* uſes to covince the Jews of their obſtinacie, *Rom.* x. *I demand*, ſaith he, *have they not heard?* And again, *Did not Iſrael know?* Yes, *all day long I ſtretched out my hands to them*, and they would not take warning. Such cannot take up the Speech of thoſe Caſt-aways, *Lord when did we hear thee give us warning?* Thus God aggravates the ſins of the Jews,

Jer.

Serm. II.

Jer. xliv. 4. *I ſent unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, riſing early, and ſending them, ſaying; O, do not this abominable thing which I hate.* The neglect of theſe forewarnings wrung tears from Chriſt over *Jeruſalem*, Luk. xix. 41. *He wept over the City*, and ſaid, *O that thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* And as it made him weep in compaſſion, ſo it ſhall make him laugh hereafter at their deſtruction, *Prov.* i. 24. *Becauſe I called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded, I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear comes.* A

You have ſeen the Preface; *I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear.* Come we now to the Admonition it ſelf, whom we ſhould fear, that's in theſe words, *Fear him who after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell.* B

And here, firſt take the words together, and then obſerve in general; we have not here a bare deſignation of the perſon, but here is a ſolemn and awful deſcription of him whom we ſhould fear. The Text runs not thus, *Fear God*, but it brings him in with this dreadful repreſentation of him, *Fear him that hath power to kill, and to caſt into Hell.* Indeed, were we ſuch as we ſhould be, the very naming of God would be ſufficient to ſtrike us with fear. And the Scripture ſometimes calls upon us to fear him, by the naming him to us. *Fear God and keep his Commandements*, ſaith *Solomon*. There is motive enough in that name, to make us to fear him. As *Moſes* ſpeaks, *Thou ſhalt fear this glorious and fearful Name, the Lord thy God*, Deut. xxviii. 58. But yet partly to rouſe our dulneſs and ſtupidity, partly to overmaſter our prophaneſs, we are grown too familiar and bold with the Name of God, it works not upon us; and partly to fetch us off from the fear of men, and miſchief from them; ſee our Saviour ſets forth God with terms of terrour and Majeſty, *Fear him that can kill, and caſt into Hell.* C D

Thus Saint *John* in the Revelation repreſents Chriſt attended with judgments. He brings in Chriſt, *riding on a white Horſe conquering, and to conquer.* After him comes the repreſentation of War and blood-ſhed, on a red Horſe. Then follows death on a pale Horſe, and then Hell follows after him. Oh! 'tis good to repreſent God to our thoughts, as cloathed with terrour and Majeſty, eſpecially in caſe of temptation to ſin. O then let his terrour make thee afraid. Every one hath not the grace to ſay with *Joſeph*, *How ſhall I do this great wickedneſs, and ſo ſin againſt God?* The love of God is not ſo powerful in every mans heart. Well, if love will not do it, let his dread reſtrain thee. *Fac, fac, vel timore pœnæ ſi non potes facere amore juſtitiæ*, ſaith *Auguſtine*. If piety to God do not diſſwade thee, yet let pity to thine own ſoul, not to plunge it into perdition, let that deter thee. I ſay 'tis good to nouriſh this fear of him in our hearts, to look up to God with conſideration of thoſe dreadful attributes that may keep us in aw; and then ſay to thy ſoul, as *Paul* ſpeaks, *Shall I* E

provoke

Serm. II.

A *provoke the Lord to anger? am I ſtronger then he?* 1 Cor. x. 22. Look upon Chriſt as St. *John* deſcribes him, *holding the Keys of Death and Hell in his hand*; as the Heathens deſcribed their *Jupiter*, holding in his hand a Thunder-bolt. See how the Prophet *Nahum* deſcribes him, and tremble at him, *Chap.* i. 20. *God is gracious, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious, the Lord will take vengeance on his adverſaries, he reſerves wrath for his enemies.* Thus *Job* aws his heart with the meditation of God's greatneſs; *He is wiſe in heart and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardned his heart againſt him, and proſpered?* Chap. ix. 4.

B We have ſeen the repreſentation the Text makes of God in the general. Let us take it now aſunder into the particulars of which it conſiſts; *Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell.*

And here take notice of three things;

Firſt, His Singularity, *Fear him.*

Secondly, His Authority, *He hath power.*

Thirdly, His Severity, *After he hath killed he can caſt into Hell.*

And theſe three are placed and ſet in oppoſition to the fear of men.

C I. *Fear them not*, that's in the Plural. Let them be as mad as they will, here is one to be feared above them all.

II. *Fear not them that do kill*, or as St. *Matthew* expreſſes it οἱ ἀποκτέννοντες, that are *able to kill*; but here is not onely a δύναμις, in God, ſtrength, and ability, but the Text hath a fuller word, 'tis ἐξουσία, he hath power and authority to do it.

III. *Fear not them that kill the body*, and that's the utmoſt that they can do; but fear him that can both kill here, and damn hereafter, and caſt into Hell; that's the ſeverity.

Firſt take notice of the ſingularity of the perſon, *fear Him.* And
D this calls off the many diſtractions of our fear, and reduces them all to one head, fixes our fear upon Him onely who is truly to be feared. A wicked man that is unacquainted with God, and his holy fear, is ſubject to many noyſom fears and perplexities, and may crie out with *Cain, Every one that meets me will kill me.* But he that fixes his fear upon God, needs fear no other fear. God checks theſe diſtractions of heart in his People, *Of whom haſt thou been afraid*, or *feared, that thou haſt not remembred me?* Eſai. lvii. 11. *There is one Law-giver*, ſaith St. *James*, *that is able to ſave, or to deſtroy*, Chap. iv. 12. We ſtand or fall to Him onely. Be ſure not to provoke Him, and trouble
E not thy ſelf with any other fear. 'Tis the benefit which Chriſtianity and Religion affords us, if it be truly ſetled in our hearts, that it frees us from the many anxieties and perplexities that naturally we are ſubject to, and reduces all our fears to this one, to fear our God. There is in us naturally a δεισιδαιμονία, many ſuperſtitious fears, that do haunt us, many Dreams of vain fears that do diſquiet us; but *Solomon* ſhews us the cure of them, when he ſaith, *but fear thou God*, Eccl. v. 7.

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v. 7. The fear of him is a Sovereign antidote againſt all other fears that may perplex us. You know what *Abimelech* ſaid to the men of *Sechem*, Judg. ix. *Whether is it better to ſubmit your ſelves to three-ſcore and ten perſons, or that one reign over you?* Much more may we ſay, Whether is it better to ſuffer the diſtractions of ſo many fears as fleſh and blood will miniſter to us, or to place our fear upon our God, that He may rule over us. A

That's the firſt thing conſiderable, the ſingularity of the perſon, not *them*, but *him*.

Secondly, Take notice of another inducement to fear Him, that's his Power and Authority that he hath over us, to afflict and puniſh us. B

Firſt, Thoſe others whom we are forbidden to fear, may moſtwhat be ſuch as have no right over us to hurt and afflict us. Saint *Matthew* calls them οἱ δυνάμενοι, men of ſtrength, and force, and violence. Such as the *Danites* were, and their threatnings of *Micah*, *Take heed leſt angry men from amongſt us run upon thee, and thou loſe thy life, with the lives of thine houſhold:* Free-booters they were, and did all by force, *Judg.* xviii. 25. Such that have no other Authority to hurt, then that which *Laban* boaſted of to *Jacob*, Gen. xxxi. 29. *'Tis in the power of mine hand to do you hurt.* Such alſo the Prophet *Micah* complains of, *Chap.* ii. 1. *They practiſe miſchief becauſe it is in the power of their hand.* Like *Nimrod* and his Companions, that filled the earth with violence, *Gen.* vi. 11. I, but God hath not onely δύναμιν, ſtrength and ability, but the Text tells us he hath ἐξουσίαν, juſt and lawful Power and Authority. And ſo not onely neceſſity but duty requires us to fear him. *David* tells us, *He ought to be feared*, Pſal. lxxvi. 2. and even of thoſe that ought not to fear any other Princes and Potentates, whom all other tremble at, muſt tremble at Him; *He cuts off the Spirit of Princes, and is terrible to the Kings of the Earth*, Verſ. 12. The Book of *Job* acknowledges this power of God, *Chap.* xxv. 2. *Dominion and fear are with him.* *Jus* and *Vis*, Right and Might too. He can deſtroy us, and He hath Authority to deſtroy us. C D

Secondly, Other men may afflict the Innocent, but *the Judge of all the World will do right*, ſaith *Abraham*. *The King's power loveth Righteouſneſs*, ſaith *David*; *He executeth Judgment and Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. xcix. *We are ſure* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *that the Judgment of God is according to Truth*, Rom. ii 2. When he puniſhes, there is both *meritum criminis*, *& ordo poteſtatis*, as *Auguſt.* ſpeaks; He hath Authority to inflict it, and we deſerve to ſuffer it. E

O, then fear Him that ought to be feared! The apprehenſion of this infinite power of God, in puniſhing or rewarding, will make us ſlight all the fears and hopes of the World. *Exhorreſce quod minatur Omnipotens, ama quod promittit Omnipotens, ut vileſcet mundus ſive promittens, ſive terrens*, Aug.

Thirdly, Here is yet a third inducement to make us take off

our

A our fear from men, and to ſettle it upon God, and that is the ſeverity of God; the great miſchief we incur by offending of him, *He can kill*, and more then that, *He can caſt into Hell.*

Here is both the bodily, and the ſpiritual puniſhment, both temporal and eternal deſtruction, both Rods and Scorpions; *He can kill the body*, and then damn both body and ſoul, and caſt them into Hell.

Firſt, Here is the bodily death, and 'tis repreſented not by Our dying, but by His killing of us; that is, not onely he can take us away by the courſe of Nature, *If he gather up our breath, we are gone pre-*
B *ſently*; but he is able to cut off our lives by a Judgment, by an untimely death, by an unnatural death, by an accurſed death. He hath infinite wayes to deſtroy our lives, and to cut us off from the Land of the Living by extraordinary Judgments. And ſuch a death is moſt uncomfortable. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Er*, the firſt-born of *Judah*, *That he was evil in the ſight of the Lord, and the Lord ſlew him*, took him away by ſome heavy judgment, 1 *Chron.* ii. 3. And ſo 'tis ſaid of *Saul, that for his ſin in ſeeking to a Witch, therefore the Lord ſlew him*, 1 Chron. x. 14. And ſo *Hophni* and *Phineas*, 'tis ſaid *they were wicked, and the Lord would ſlay them.*

C The Text means ſuch a death as *Moſes* threatned to thoſe Rebels, *Numb.* xvi. *That they ſhould not die the common death of all men*; but the Lord will make a new thing, and ſwallow them up by ſome remarkable judgment. Oh! that's dreadful, to dye by the hand of the Lord: As is the man, ſo is his ſtrength. The killing by man is nothing to the cutting off by God's hand; that imbitters death, and makes it dreadful. That's one degree above the miſchief that comes by men. Men may kill us, and yet it may be well 'twixt God and us; but when God kills us, when he becomes our enemy and ſlays us, that's an heavy and dreadful Judgment, there is the bitterneſs of death in
D ſuch a deſtruction.

Secondly, But then ſecondly, *after he hath killed*, he hath more vengeance in ſtore for us, *He can caſt into Hell.* When men have killed, they have done their worſt, we know they have no more to do: but what ſaith *David? Lord who knows the power of thine anger?* Pſal. xc. 11. 'Tis unconceiveable, *Who can ſtand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger?* Nah. i. 6. What the Prophet *Eſai* ſpeaks of the joys of Heaven, is moſt true of the pains of Hell: *Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man*, what are thoſe heavy things which God hath pre-
E pared for them that fear him not. No, God's temporal Judgments are but the beginnings of ſorrows; are but like the whippings and ſcourgings before the Crucifying: they are but καπνὸς ὀργῆς, βασάνων πρόοιμον, ὕπου ὁ πῦρ καταφλεγόμενον, ἐκεῖ ἀνθρακες ἀναπτόμενοι. *Nazian. Orat.* 15. *The anger of the Lord ſhall ſmoke againſt them*, ſaith *Moſes*. Temporal Judgments are but the ſmoke of his anger; but in Hell there are the flames of his anger; that fire burns fiercely, and there is no

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quenching of it. In compare with this, all outward ſufferings are not to be eſteemed. *Take the Aſhes of the Furnace*, ſaith God to *Moſes*, *and caſt them into the Air, and they ſhall be ſores and plagues upon them.* Such are all Temporal Puniſhments, they are but the aſhes of the Furnace of Hell fire; not to be compared with thoſe everlaſting torments. The *Sodomites* had a dreadful overthrow in this world, but that's not all, God hath other judgments in ſtore for them: our Saviour aſſures us of it, it ſhall be ſo and ſo with the Land of *Sodom* at the day of Judgment. Beſides that dreadful overthrow, St. *Jude* tells us thoſe Cities ſuffer *the vengeance of eternal fire*, Jude vii. A

So then lay all theſe together, B

1. *Men* and *God*; and which think you is the ſtronger and more powerful?

2. To be killed by *Men*, or ſlain by *God?*

3. A *temporal death*, or *eternal damnation*; which of theſe are more to be feared? 'Tis Saint *Hieroms* Speech, "If men can "do more for us then God, let's obey men rather then God. So ſays the Text, if men can do more againſt us then God can do, let's fear them rather then God. But that we are ſure they cannot, and therefore fear not man, but tremble at God. And that brings in, C

Thirdly, The laſt particular of the Text, the ſeconding and ratifying of Chriſt's words in this ingemination; *Yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.*

Yea, I ſay, unto you, fear him.

And this redoubling of the ſpeech adds a great enforcement to the admonition. 'Tis like the laſt ſtroke of the hammer that rivets and drives up all to the head; 'tis like that ſpeech of our Saviour, at the end of his Sermons, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*: or like that in St. *Luke*, *Let this ſaying ſink down into your ears.* God ſpeaks once, yea twice, to open the ears of men, and to *ſeal their inſtruction*, Job xxxiii. 14, 16. Thus *David* uſes this ingemination; *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may ſtand in thy ſight when thou art angry?* Pſal. lxxvi. 7. D

And 'tis worth the obſerving, that this ingemination, and re-inforcement here annexed, is to the Affirmative clauſe, not to the Negative. Our Saviour ſaith not, *Yea, I ſay unto you, fear not them*; but he places the reduplication upon the affirmative Precept, *I ſay unto you, Fear him.* And great reaſon there is for this way of expreſſion. He ſaith not again, *Fear not them*; but this he ſaith, *Fear him.*

There is, E

I. Greater Duty.

II. Greater Difficulty.

III. Greater Danger, if we do not fear him.

I. Greater Duty that obliges us.

II. Greater Difficulty to perform it.

III. Greater Danger to neglect it.

Serm. II.

A I. I ſay there is greater duty that binds us to the fear of God. In this caſe, when the queſtion comes, whom we ſhould rather fear? St. *Auguſtines* rule is a good and a ſafe direction, *Non debet minor poteſtas iraſci, ſi major prælata ſit.* Fear him moſt that hath the greateſt power to rule and command us. Should ſome under-officer enjoyn one thing, and the Sovereign power require another, whom wouldſt thou fear moſt, leſt thou ſhouldſt offend him? Sure the Supreme is more to be dreaded then any Subordinate. Thou oweſt more duty to the King then to a petty Conſtable; more to God then to any Creature.

B II. As there is more duty, ſo there is more difficulty in attaining to this fear of God, then in not fearing of men. Some natural humane courage and confidence may make us ſet light by the fear of men; *Multi nimiâ ſuperbiâ nihil timent.* An haughty ſpirit can ſcorn the threatnings that come from men. Thus *David* deſcribes a preſumptuous man; *God is not in all his thoughts, and therefore he puffs at all his enemies.* But 'tis a work of grace, a ſpiritual and ſupernatural work to ſtand in fear of God; to keep our hearts in that holy frame, as to be *in the fear of the* LORD *all the day long:* as *Solomon* ſpeaks. God muſt put his fear into our hearts, as the Prophet ſpeaks,
C or we cannot fear him.

He muſt be a man of a rare temper, whoſe heart deſpiſes all other fears, and yet can quake and tremble at the threatnings of God. Such an one was *David.* A King he was, and ſo had no Superiour whom he might fear, but yet he cries out to God, *Pſal.* cxix. *My fleſh trembles for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*

III. And then there is greater danger to be feared from God in this caſe, then can be expected from men. And where there is greater danger, there 'tis fit there ſhould be the greateſt dread. *Fear not them that can kill the body; but fear him that can caſt ſoul and body in-*
D *to hell; yea, I ſay unto you, Fear him.* The hurts that can come from men, are κατ' ἄνθρωπον according to men; but Hell and damnation, that's ὑπεράνθρωπον, beyond the courage and ſtrength of man to undergo and endure. Men may ſeem valiant and couragious in ſuffering a temporal death, *ſed æternis ignibus concremari, nec erit, nec vocabitur fortitudo.* To ſuffer the pains of Hell, 'tis above ſtrength, exceeding the ability of any to endure them. *'Tis a fearful thing,* ſaith St. *Paul, to fall into the hands of the living God.* It muſt anſwer for us againſt all the ſinful injunctions and fearful threatnings and comminations of men. *Da veniam, Imperator,* ſaith the Father, *tu carcerem comminaris;*
E *Deus autem comminatur Gehennam;* "Excuſe me, O Empe-"rour, thou threatneſt bonds and impriſonments, but God's threat-"nings are much more terrible, he threatens Hell-torments and everlaſting damnation.

A SERMON ON MARK iii. 5.

And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts, &c.

IT is a true Rule and Maxime in Divinity, that *Sins againſt the Goſpel are moſt heynous and of greateſt provocation*. When God makes offer of the greateſt mercy, there diſobedience and contempt doth enkindle in him the greateſt fury. As the ſweeteſt and ſtrongeſt Wine, makes the ſowreſt and ſharpeſt Vinegar; ſo the choiceſt favours, if they be deſpiſed, provoke in God the greateſt diſpleaſure.

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A SERMON ON MARK iii. 5.

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Sermon I.

New Covenant, 'tis proper to the Goſpel, *Jer.* xxxi. 31. *I will make a new Covenant with them, I will put my Law into their hearts, and write it in their inward parts.* They had the Law written in Tables of Stone, not on the Fleſhly Tables of their hearts. The Old Covenant had no power or efficacy to work upon the inward man. The Law teaches us, but the Goſpel enables us; that gives and works in us, what the Law requires of us. *The Law came by Moſes, but Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt,* Joh. i. 17. The Law hath power of Conviction, but 'tis the Goſpel only hath a power of Converſion. The Law, that's the Hammer that knocks at the door of our hearts; but the Goſpel, that's the Key that opens it, puts back the bar of Obduration, and lets in Grace and the Spirit into it. A B

See the truth of this in two inſtances:

1. *Nicodemus*, a great Doctour of the Law, a chief *Rabbi* amongſt the *Jews*; yet, when Chriſt tells him of the neceſſity of Regeneration, he muſt be *born again*, get a new heart, he wondred at his Doctrin, knew not what it meant, concived it impoſſible, *Joh.* iii. 4. *How can a man be born again?* So,

2. St. *Paul* before his Converſion, was an exact *Phariſee*, for all points of the Law without exception, beyond the reach of any man's reproof. Yet how hard was his heart, till the Grace of Chriſt ſeized upon him, ſubdued and ſoftned him! No, *the Law made nothing perfect.* The *blood of Bulls* could not cleanſe the Conſcience. The Circumciſion of the Heart, 'tis from the Spirit. That's the ſecond Conſideration; Men living under the Law, yet *hard.* C

III. Theſe men came under a third Conſideration; they were very forward in outward Devotion, great Zealots for the Law; no common men, but of the firſt and forwardeſt rank; ſuch as the world would call zealous Profeſſours, frequenters of the Synagogues, great Sabbatarians, wonderful ſcrupulous, leſt Chriſt ſhould prophane the Sabbath-day, *Verſe* 2. and yet ſee, under all this out-ſide of Holineſs and ſeeming Sanctity, Chriſt eſpies a dead, hard, wicked heart lurking; they are all of them men of hard hearts. D

Obſerve, *Seeming and out-ſide Sanctity may go together, and conſiſt with inward and ſpiritual hardneſs and obſtinacy.* A man may be very forward in outward acts and appearances of Piety, and yet his heart may be dead to all ſpiritual goodneſs, hardned and obdurate in all impiety. 'Tis the true conſtitution of an Hypocrite, he is all for the out-ſide of Religion, there he is excellent; he will outgo and exceed all others in ſhew; but look upon his heart, he wholly neglects it, that's full of hardneſs and ſtubborn impiety. E

Chriſt compares ſuch to Tombs and Sepulchers in Churches. Of all places in a Church, a Tomb is the faireſt and moſt beautiful, painted, and carved, and adorned; but within, 'tis the moſt noyſome and loathſome, there is nothing within but rottenneſs and corruption: So look upon the out-ſide of an Hypocrite, he is the ſeemlieſt Chriſtian in the Church, he hath the moſt ſpecious out-ſide, but what is his heart? that's

A that's dead and obdurate. St. *Paul* deſcribes them εὐπροσωπῆσαι, they *ſet a good face on it*, they make a fair ſhew, *Gal.* vi. 12. So their facing be good, 'tis no matter for their lining, though that be ragged and rotten. This dreſs of an Hypocrite,

1. 'Tis the eaſieſt work. Outſide work is a great deal more eaſie. Outward obſervances in matter of Religion, they coſt but little pains; but to work upon the heart, and to bring that in order, that's painful and laborious. As in the practice of Phyſick or Chirurgery, 'tis more eaſie to cure an outward hurt of the body, that is ill-affected or wounded; but an inward diſtemper, when a vein is broken,
B and it bleeds inward, the curing of this is a great deal more difficult. The outward *Circumciſion of the fleſh* was nothing to the inward *Circumciſion of the heart*. So St. *Paul* tells us, *Rom.* ii. 28. *He is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that Circumciſion, which is outward in the fleſh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and Circumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, whoſe praiſe is not of Men, but of God.* The outward, that may be praiſed of Men, and that's all the Hypocrite looks for. To look like a Chriſtian, is all he cares for.

2. 'Tis natural for Hypocriſie to leave the heart in hardneſs; becauſe it employs all its care in dreſſing, and trimming, and adorning
C the out-ſide. Chriſt compares an Hypocrite to a piece of ſluttiſhneſs; it will waſh the out-ſide of the Diſh, never cleanſe the in-ſide. As thoſe Diſtempers that ſend all the heat of the body outward, and cauſe great fluſhings in the face, they hinder the inward concoction, cool, and dead the Stomach and vital parts, that they cannot perform their Functions: So Hypocriſie ſends out all the heat of their Piety to the out-ſide, cauſes great fluſhings of Piety in the outward man; but chills, and cools, and deads the life of Religion in the heart. It will be careful for outward obſervance, but yet within harbour all impiety. See an inſtance of this in the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, about the condemning of Chriſt.
D They can plot and contrive the murdering of our Saviour, they make no Conſcience of that; but yet how preciſe were they in their outward obſervances! They would not enter into the Judgment-Hall for fear of incurring an irregularity, leſt they ſhould be defiled: O they muſt provide to keep the Sabbath; *for that Sabbath was a great Sabbath*. They can be Murderers, but by no means they will be Sabbath-breakers. So again, they can give money to *Judas* to betray Chriſt; but yet when *Judas* out of horror of Conſcience brings back the money, O, they would not put it into the Treaſury, 'twas *the price of blood*. How great an outward formality, and how damnable their inward ob-
E ſtinacy! And the like we find here in Chriſts Auditours. O, very tender of the Sabbath, *They watched him if he would cure on the Sabbath day*, Verſ. 2. but how blind are they in their malice againſt him! *They conſult and take counſel how they may deſtroy him*, Verſ. 6.

We have the Parties; now

Secondly, Let's conſider their ſinful Diſpoſition; that's ſaid here to be *hardneſs of heart*. And in it are two things:

Sermon I.

I. The ſubject of this evil Diſpoſition, that's the *heart*.

II. The ſinful and malicious Quality that reſides in it, that's *hardneſs*.

I. The ſubject of this evil quality is the *heart*. By heart we are not to underſtand that particular vital member of the body, as in common ſpeech we uſe to take it, but in the Scripture-Language: ſo it ſignifies the Soul and Spirit of a Man. Thus *Gen.* vi. 5. *God ſaw that every imagination of mans heart was evil continually.* So again, *Jer.* xix. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it?* And again, *Mat.* xv. 19. *Out of the heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries.*

Nor is it here taken onely for that leading and commanding faculty of the Soul, the Will of Man; but it ſignifies the whole Soul and Spirit of Man. The whole Soul, and all the Faculties of it, are perverted and hardned, dead and dull to any goodneſs, froward and obſtinate to any good motion, or holy action. As in a diſtempered Clock, wherein both the Spring and the Wheels are out of frame, it cannot ſtrike one ſtroak right.

1. The Mind and Underſtanding, that's over-grown with hardneſs and blindneſs. Πάχυνσις ſignifies both. Indeed 'tis active in matters of inferiour natures; but in ſpiritual things no ſtone blinder. As the Eye looking downward ſees clearly; but if it look up to the Sun, it is preſently dazled. How untractable is our Underſtanding to matters of Religion? Able enough we are in other things, but here we are dead, and dull, and moſt unteachable: Eagle-eyed in worldly things, Mole-eyed in ſpirituals.

2. Our Memories in matters of Religion, how is that dulled and benummed? how fluid? No retentive power in it for that which is ſpiritual. You may ſee this in Chriſt's Diſciples: though they were in part ſanctified, they forgat the Miracle of the Loaves, *for their hearts were hardned*, Mark vi. 52. Our Memory, which ſhould be the ſtore-houſe and treaſury of all heavenly Truths, 'tis utterly unable to retain ſpiritual things. Let the ſeed of the Word be ſown in it; yet the Devil comes and takes it out, that it can have no abiding in us.

3. The Will, of all others, how is that hardned, brawn'd, ſteeled? when the Underſtanding is convinced; yet how do our Wills repel, and oppoſe any Divine Truths? *Prævolat intellectus, & ſequitur tardus, vel nullus effectus*, Aug. *in* Pſal. cxviii. Our Wills are poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of contradiction. We may as eaſily remove Mountains, pierce the Rocks, melt the Flint, as perſwade and prevail with an hard obdurate will.

4. Our Affections which are quick and ſtirring in other matters, how dead and dull are they to ſpiritual Duties? *We have piped unto you*, ſaith Chriſt, *but you have not danced; we have mourned to you, but you have not wept.* Speak to natural men of the joys of heaven, yet whoſe heart longs for them? tell them of the pains and torments of hell, they never tremble at them. Acquaint them with the love of God,

A God, it never melts them. Shew them the odiouſneſs of ſin, they never loath it. Perſwade them of the beauty and lovelyneſs of Piety, they take no delight in it. Thus you ſee the whole frame of our Souls is out of order, a cruſt of hardneſs hath over-grown the whole man.

We have ſeen the ſubject of this evil quality, which is the heart and ſoul of man: Now,

II. Let's conſider the quality it ſelf, and that is called *hardneſs*. Now we muſt know, there is a threefold *hardneſs of heart*.

1. Is natural and inbred in us, an *hardneſs of heart* which we all bring with us into this World, which makes us ſo unteachable and un-
B tractable to any good. The very *Heathen* men did diſcern it, which made them complain, that our Nature was *mater vitiorum, noverca virtutum*; a fruitful Mother and Nurſe of Vice, we are exceeding prone to that; but a curſt Stepdame to Virtue and Piety, we have no liſt or love to that.

2. There is an acquired and a contracted *hardneſs of heart*, which increaſes that inbred and natural hardneſs. When cuſtom in ſinning, begets in us a firm reſolution to continue, and perſiſt, and go on in ſinning. St. *Paul* charges this upon cuſtomary ſinners, *Rom.* ii. 5. *Thou after thine hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up to thy ſelf wrath*
C *againſt the day of wrath.* And he forewarns us of it, that we take heed, leſt it grow upon us, *Heb.* iii. 13. *Leſt any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.*

3. There is an hardneſs inflicted by God, a penal and puniſhing hardneſs; when God puniſhes a wicked man with this ſpiritual Judgment of an *hard heart*. Such was *Pharaoh*'s *hardneſs of heart*. God being provoked by our wilful obſtinacy, withdraws his Grace, leaves a ſinner to himſelf, ſuffers *Satan to ſtand at his right hand.*

1. The firſt is the *hardneſs* of our *natural inclination.*

2. The ſecond is an *hardneſs* of *purpoſe and reſolution.*

D 3. The third is a *penal hardneſs*, by God's *juſt judgment* and *deſertion.* All woful and lamentable; but the Text principally reſpects the two former.

The enquiry then would be, Wherein doth this *hardneſs of heart* conſiſt? how ſhall we diſcern it? what are the properties and effects of it? Take theſe four following.

(1.) *Durum non cedit.* Thoſe things that are hard, they are unyielding and impenetrable; whereas that which is ſoft, will eaſily admit of any impreſſion. But a ſtone, touch it, nay offer more force to it, and ſtrike it, there is yet no yielding in it. And ſuch is the con-
E dition of an *hard heart*, ſtubborn and impenetrable. Till this *hardneſs* be removed by the mighty hand of God, there is no working upon it; it will not give place to any means of grace that God hath appointed, though never ſo powerful.

1. The Word of God, that's a powerful agent, yet that cannot prevail with an *hard heart*. The Pſalmiſt ſhews this in that Caveat he give us, *To day, if ye will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts.*

Sermon I.

An hard heart will ſet out many a Sermon. And *Solomon* tells us of ſuch kind of ſinners, *Prov.* xxix. 1. that *though they be often reproved, yet will harden their neck.* The Apoſtle calls them ἀνπιθεῖς, *unperſwadable men*, no perſwaſion can prevail with them. A

2. There be many good motions, which the Spirit of God ſuggeſts to a ſinner: it inſpires, caſts ſome good thoughts into him; but they take no place, they are like ſparks falling upon moiſt things, they do not kindle, but quench preſently; Or he turns away his thoughts from theſe holy motions to other things, as he that lights up candles, that he might not ſee the flaſhes of lightning, which come from the skies. Such were the men of the old world, *Gen.* vi. 3. The Spirit of God did ſtrive with the men of that Generation; but it was in vain, there came no good of it. And ſuch were the people of *Iſrael*, as *Eſai* complains of them, *Chap.* lxiii. 10. *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit*, would not embrace the ſweet motion of it. B

3. The mercies of God, they ſhould prevail with us; but an hard heart yields not to them: *Rom.* ii. 45. *Knoweſt thou not, that the bounty of God ſhould lead thee to repentance? but thou, after the hardneſs of thy heart* deſpiſeſt his mercies. Mercy, that's like an oil to ſupple and ſoak into our hearts, to ſoften and intenerate them; but an hard heart can refuſe this ſweet impreſſion, the mercies of God cannot prevail with it. C

4. The Judgments of God, they are of great power and prevalency. Though Mercy doth not draw us, yet Judgment that ſhould drive us to him. No, an hard heart can deſpiſe Judgments, ſet them at nought. As *Pharaoh* did, he did not *apponere cor*, but *opponere*, ſet not his heart to regard God's Judgments, but ſet his heart againſt them. They were like the ſtrokes of the Hammer upon the Anvil, they made no impreſſion.

(2.) A ſecond property and effect of an *hard heart*, is, *durum non ſentit*; that which is hard and brawnie, is void of ſenſe and apprehenſion. The tendereſt fleſh, 'tis of quickeſt apprehenſion; but a brawny heart is dull and inſenſible. St. *Paul* deſcribes ſuch kinde of ſinners, *Epheſ.* iv. 19. he calls them ἀπηλγηκότας, *paſt feeling*, *hard-hearted*, and *remorſeleſs* ſinners. The heart of a good Chriſtian, that's exceeding tender, as it was in good *Joſiah*; 2 *King.* xxii. at the *reading of the Law*, his heart was *tender*, like melted wax, fit for any impreſſion, and he *humbled himſelf before the* LORD. But *Pharaoh* and *Ahab* how ſenſeleſs and ſtupid were they? D

Will you ſee the ſtupor and lethargie of an *hard heart?* ſuch an heart, no ſuggeſtions of Satan, though never ſo dreadful, affrights them, they ſtartle not at them; no inſpirations of God's Spirit doth at all affect them, they perceive them not; the checks of conſcience never move them; the guilt of ſin doth not dare them or perplex them. They are like *Solomon's* Drunkard, *Prov.* xxiii. 24. *They have ſtricken me, and I was not ſick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not.* E

(3.) Another

A (3.) Another property of an *hard heart*, is, *durum non flectitur*; That which is hard is inflexible. A ſtone may ſooner be broken, then bent: and ſuch is the temper of an *hard heart*, no art or endeavour can bow or bend it. *Pharaoh*, how many wayes did God uſe to perſwade him, and to bring him to the bent of due obedience! Firſt a Meſſage, then a Miracle, then a Judgment, then a Mercy, then a Threatning; but *Pharaoh* was obſtinate againſt all theſe endeavours, at laſt he brake him in pieces, there was no bowing or bending him. Thus God complains of the people of the Jews: *He ſent to them, riſing early and late, but they ſtill refuſed.* It makes God give over his
B more gentle corrections; *Why ſhould you be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more*, Eſa. i. 5. See the doom the Prophet paſſes upon ſuch an inflexible, ſtubborn ſinner, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 16. *I know that God hath determined to deſtroy thee; becauſe thou haſt not hearkned to my counſel.* An *hard heart* will not be bent by perſwaſion, 'tis therefore fitted and prepared for deſtruction, *Jer.* vi. 29, 30. *The bellows are burnt, the lead is conſumed of the fire, the Founder melteth in vain; for the wicked are not plucked away. Reprobate Silver ſhall men call them; becauſe the* LORD *hath rejected them.*

C (4.) *Durum repercutit.* There is not only a not yielding in that which is hard; but there is a reſiſtance, a contrary action repelling and driving back any action upon it. Smite a ſtone, and it will not only not yield; but it enforces the ſtroke back again. There is a reaction and repercuſſion in reſiſtance, it will drive back the ſtrength upon him that ſmote it. *Sagitta in lapidem nunquam figitur, interdum reſiſtens percutit dirigentem*, Hierom. *ad Nepot.* And this is the diſpoſition of an *hard heart*, it will reſiſt and oppoſe it ſelf againſt any action of God, and ſtrive againſt it.

There is not only in an *hard heart* a wilful obſtinacy, but a vi-
D olent contumacy againſt the grace of God: *Non ſolùm averſas, ſed adverſas voluntates habent peccatores; non tantùm nolentes, ſed repugnantes.* Thus our Saviour deſcribes ſuch obdurate ſinners, He compares them to fierce Dogs and Maſtiffs, *Caſt not that which is holy unto Dogs, they will not only tread it under their feet, but they will turn again*, and offer violence to you, *Matth.* vii. 6. St. *Stephen* charges the hard-hearted Jews with this Contumacy, *Ye ſtiff-necked and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, ye do alwayes reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt:* And then he adds, *Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers perſecuted?* that's the *contrapaſſum à reſiſtente*; they recoild back upon him, that would work upon them. So St. *Paul* charges the Jews, *Acts*
E xiii. 46. *It was neceſſary the word of God ſhould be ſpoken unto you, but ye put it from you*; as he that thruſt *Moſes* away, ſaying, *Who hath made thee a Ruler amongſt us?* How often did the Jews repel the word of God's grace, with Contradictions and Blaſphemies, with Violence and Perſecutions! As *Eſai* complains of them, *Chap.* lxv. 2. *All the day long have I ſtretched forth my hand unto a diſobedient and gainſaying people.*

And

Sermon I.

And this Reſiſtance will ſhew it ſelf in three Particulars: A

1. In ſtiffneſs, and pertinacy, and wilfulneſs of opinion. Deal with an *hard hearted* man to convince his Judgment, to gain and recover him out of any Error, what obſtinacy and pertinacy ſhall you find? there will be no yielding to any evidence of Truth. They are ignorant, and they will be ignorant. A tender heart is a teachable heart; any word of God ſhall convince him preſently: but an hardned ſinner, accounts it a diſgrace to be thought to have erred. As the *Heathen* man *Symmachus*, anſwered the Chriſtians that would have recall'd them from their Idolatry, *Sera, & contumelioſa, eſt emendatio ſenectutis.* Go about to reform an old, B inveterate Error, you offer ſuch a man diſgrace and contumely. You may ſee this ſtubbornneſs of opinion in the High-Prieſt, *Acts* iv. 16. How wilfully did they ſhut their eyes againſt a clear conviction of their former Error? *Here is indeed*, ſaid they, *a notable Miracle wrought by theſe men* (Peter *and* John) *manifeſt to all that dwell in Jeruſalem, and we cannot deny it*, but yet they will not *underſtand; and ſeeing, they did ſee, but not perceive; for their heart was waxed groſs.*

2. This reſiſtance will appear in obſtinate continuance in wicked courſes. Say what can be ſaid, an hard, reſiſting heart will not be C reclaym'd. Thus thoſe hard hearted *Jews* anſwered the Prophet *Jeremy* ſtifly and peremptory, *The word that thou ſpeakeſt unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not do it*; we are reſolved of our courſes, *Chap.* xliv. 16. Let *Elias* threaten *Ahab*, he *hath ſold himſelf to do wickedly*. Whereas an heart that is ſoftned, anſwers every call and check that God gives it, as *Paul* did, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* But obſtinacy ſpurs on in ſpight of all perſwaſions. St. *Paul* took comfort in this, that his heart yielded to the call of God: *I was not diſobedient to the heavenly viſion*, Acts xxvi. 19. *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue*, Job vi. 24. D

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A *Hardneſs of heart* hath ſtill ſome quarrels and exceptions: *They are contentious, and will not obey the truth*, Rom. ii. 8. They will *ſpeak ill of the way of the Lord*, ſtill raiſing queſtions that engender ſtrife. Whereas a ſoft heart is willing to take ſatisfaction, glad to have doubts cleared and aſſoiled, labours to be grounded in the Truth, and eſtabliſhed in it, is troubled at ſcruples, trembles at doubtings and waverings; but abhors cavilling and oppoſing. Thus the Diſciples took ſatisfaction, *Acts* xi. 18.

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Thirdly, Is every mans heart over-grown with this callaſis Obduration?

First, Take heed of encreaſing it.

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Sermon I.

First, Take heed of encreasing it. As natural Diseases may, by evil ordering of our selves, be further encreased; so may Natural Corruptions. How shall we avoid that? A

I. Be careful to avoid, and abstain even from small sins, they may make up this evil of Obduration. As the stone in the Bladder is further encreased by small gravel; so even those sins which we account little, practised and accustomed, do naturally engender and encrease our spiritual hardness (*Heb.* iii. 13. A man may be *hardned by the deceitfulness of sin.* Small sins are deceitful sins; they seem not so dangerous as they prove unto us. *Quod minimum est, minimum est, sed ex multis minimis fit malum.* Gravel is but gravel; but a great deal of B gravel may cake into a stone. *Ista levia peccata noli contemnere: si contemnis quando appendis, expaveſce quando numeras; levia multa faciunt unum grande, multæ guttæ implent flumen, multa grana faciunt messem.* Aug.

II. Especially be careful not to fall into more gross and notorious sins, they have a special force to harden the heart. Such sins waste the Conscience, make havock of Grace, sear the Conscience with an hot iron. When *David* cut off the lap of *Saul*'s Garment, 'tis said *his heart smote him*; but when he sinned fouly in his Adultery and Murder, 'tis not said then *his heart smote him*; No, it grew hard upon the com- C mission of those heynous sins, till God dispatcht his Prophet *Nathan* to him, to arouze and waken him.

III. Would'st thou not increase this hardness of heart? above all take heed of sinning against the light, and evidence, and dictates of Conscience. Even great and gross sins have their alleviations from ignorance, that we have not done them wittingly, when our hearts forbad us. It was St. *Paul*'s case, when he had committed an heynous sin in persecuting the Church; *But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly*: his Conscience misled him, he did not overbear and contradict his Conscience. In this case, we destroy our Conscience if we D disobey it. *Sæpè fracta surgendo, discit non surgere.* The dictates of Conscience are like *Achitophel*'s Counsel; reject those counsels, and go against them, and Conscience, like *Achitophel*, destroys it self. When our Conscience sayes to us, *This is a great sin, commit it not*; and yet, in spight of Conscience, and the checks it gives thee, thou wilt run on, it is just with God to suffer Conscience to strangle and stifle it self, to harden thine heart, and to seal thee up with the spirit of Obduration, unto the day of destruction.

And as we must take heed of encreasing the hardness of heart; So E

Secondly, We must use all good means to remove it, and to get tender, and feeling, and softned hearts. Wouldest thou be rid of this great evil? Labour to find and feel thine hardness. *Nemo insanabilior eo, qui sibi sanus videtur*, Aug. *Æger, si non sentiens, periculosiùs laborat*, Bern. Diseases unfelt, are unregarded. Some men have the Stone in the Bladder, and yet of a long time they are not troubled with

A with it, and then, no marvel, if they look not out for help againſt it. *Hardneſs of heart* hath that ill property in it, that it hinders feeling of it. As he that is ſick of a Lethargie, the more the Diſeaſe encreaſes, the leſs he perceives it. *Cor durum ſeipſum non exhorret, quia nec ſentit*, ſaith *Bernard*. An hard heart is never troubled, becauſe it is not acquainted with its own Malady. Bleſs not thy ſelf becauſe thy heart condems thee not. St. *Auguſtine* ſaith well, *non omne durum rectum, nec omne ſtupidum ſanum*; a thing may be ſtiff, and yet not ſtrait; and a man not feel any ayl, and yet not be in health. 'Tis a good degree to health, to know our Diſeaſe, as *Solomon* ſpeaks in his prayer,
B *to know the plague of his own heart.*

And when thou haſt found it, and felt it, uſe theſe means to remove it.

I. Complain to God, as to the great Phyſition of thy Soul, who alone is able to cure this malady. Other means may ſtupifie thee; but God's means alone can cure thee. Thus we ſee the people of God bemoaned themſelves to him for their *hardneſs of heart*, Eſai. lxiii. 17. *O* LORD, *why are our hearts hardened from thy fear?* Put God in mind of his Promiſe, that *He will take away the ſtone out of thy heart, and give thee an heart of fleſh.* Smite on thy *hard heart* with the penitent *Publi-*
C *can*, LORD, *be merciful to me a ſinner.*

II. Then lay thine heart under the dint and ſtroke of the Word. That Word enlivened by his Spirit, is a mighty Inſtrument to bruiſe, and ſoften, and mollifie the heart, *Jer.* xxiii. 29. *Is not my word like a fire, ſaith the* LORD, *and like a Hammer, that breaks the Rock in pieces?* His Threatning word, that will break and bruiſe us; his Promiſing word, that will ſoften and melt us. Good *Joſiah*, when the Scripture was read to him, his heart melted within him. *Did not our hearts burn within us*, ſaith the two Diſciples, *when he opened to us the Scriptures?*

III. The dayly practice of Repentance is of great force to ſoften
D our hearts. Impenitency, that hardens; Repentance, that ſoftens and melts our hearts. A mournful heart will prove a mollified heart. There be two names given to Repentance, which ſhew the vertue of it to work upon the heart.

1. 'Tis called Compunction, that enters indeed, and goes to the quick.

2. 'Tis called Contrition, that bruiſes and breaks the *hardneſs of heart*, and makes capable of any good impreſſion. A dayly dropping upon a hard ſtone, will pierce into it, and wear it away: And ſo the dayly diſtillations of penitential tears, are of great force to wear away
E this ſpiritual hardneſs of an obdurate heart.

A SERMON ON ECCLESIASTES viii. 11.

Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily; therefore the heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil.

YE have formerly heard of the great evil of an hard heart; both inbred by our natural corruption, and farther increaſed by our ſtubborneſs and wilful rebellion in ſinning. It will be a profitable enquiry to ſearch into the cauſes, how ſo great a prodigie and monſter ſhould be in Nature: To ſee men turned into ſtones; That the heart of man, which is naturally of the tendereſt conſtitution, ſhould be hardned into ſo much ſtiffneſs and obduration. 'Tis a Miracle in the courſe of grace, *of ſtones to raiſe up children unto Abraham*, Matth. iii. 9. And 'tis a great wonder to ſee a quite contrary change, to ſee the ſons of *Adam* turned into ſtones, and to become obſtinate and inflexible.

Now the firſt and chiefeſt cauſe of it, is in our ſelves. God indeed, being juſtly provoked, withdraws his grace, and leaves us to our ſelves; (*Obdurat, quos non emollit*; He is ſaid to harden thoſe whom he doth not ſoften.) And Satan ſolicits and tempts our will to be ſtubborn againſt God. But neither God, nor Satan do really or effectually produce this hardneſs in us, we breed it in our ſelves. As ill diet may occaſion the Stone in the Bladder; but it is the inward diſtemper of the body, that immediately breeds it. We are hard, becauſe we will be hard. 'Tis a diſeaſe of the will, and ſo a wilful diſeaſe. *Ligamur vinculis propriæ voluntatis*: the cords of ſin with which we are bound, are of our own twiſting; we make, and take occaſions of hardning our ſelves. Nay; ſuch is our proneneſs unto this evil, that thoſe things which in their own nature, and by Gods appointment are uſeful and helpful to mollifie and ſoften us, as the mercies of God, the means of grace, the bleſſed opportunities and hints of converſion, a wicked heart will turn all theſe into occaſions and motives of further hardneſs.

That's a dangerous and incurable diſeaſe, when wholeſome Medicines that ſhould work a cure, do further encreaſe the ſickneſs, and more enrage it; like ſome kind of fires, the more water you pour upon

Sermon I.

on them, the fiercer they burn: the more mercy is offered, the more 'tis deſpiſed. *Eſai* tells us, this is the perverſe Diſpoſition of an hard heart, Chap. xxvi. 10. *Let favour be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteouſneſs, in the Land of uprightneſs will he deal unjuſtly, and will not behold the Majeſty of the Lord.* A

'Tis that which *Solomon* takes notice of in my Text: he tells us, God is exceeding patient towards wicked men; as *David* before him, *Pſal.* vii. God is ſtrong and patient, and God is provoked every day, yet He forbears to execute His wrath upon ſinners. A great mercy not to be preſently cut off and deſtroyed. How doth an hard heart entertain this mercy? What uſe doth he make of it? are they won and reſtrained by it? Oh! no, they are the more hardened, they encourage themſelves the more in ſinning. *Patientiam Dei commeatum faciunt peccandi*, as the Father ſpeaks. God's patience is turned into an advantage of more ungodlineſs. Becauſe God forbears them, doth not preſently puniſh them, *therefore their hearts are fully ſet in them to do evil.* B

So then, the Text ſets out the great abuſe that the ſinful world offers to the patience of God. And in it obſerve theſe two Particulars.

Firſt, The gracious exerciſe and practice of God's patience and forbearance; that's in theſe words, *Sentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily.* C

Secondly, The ungracious and prophane abuſe that the world makes of this patience and forbearance of God, they ſin the rather for it, they grow more obdurate; *Their hearts are wholly ſet in them to do evil.*

Come we to the

Firſt, That's the exerciſe of God's patience and forbearance towards wicked men. For the nature and quality of it, we muſt know this dealing of God with wicked men, 'tis a mixt Action, a compound of Juſtice and Mercy. 'Tis not *actus puræ miſericordiæ*, 'tis not all mercy, full perfect mercy that He vouchſafes them; that's the childrens portion. No, He deals with the wicked, not as a merciful Father, but as a milde Judge. 'Tis not *amor ſummus*, fatherly love, He ſhews to them; but 'tis *moderata ira*, a moderated, and delayed, and a reſtrained anger. And that will appear in three Particulars, which the Text affords us. D

Firſt, Here is *ſententia lata*, the Text ſuppoſes that, that a Sentence againſt ungodly men is already paſſed, and decreed againſt them. Think, or think not of it, as you pleaſe, ſlight and deſpiſe it, as moſt men do, you will one day find it to be true, that a ſad Sentence is paſſed upon you. That's an act of Juſtice, and of God's Severity.

Secondly, Here is *ſententia dilata*; this Sentence of condemnation is for a time ſuſpended from execution. 'Tis enacted and denounced, the fact is condemned, the puniſhment determined, the Warrant for execution is already ſigned; only here is a mixture of mercy: 'tis yet but a Warrant dormant, not preſently executed. We may a little invert St. *Peter's* Speech, *Their damnation as yet ſlumbereth.* E

Thirdly, Here is *tractus*, and *mora dilationis*, that's the time and continuance of this forbearance, the lengthening out of this patience of God.

Sermon I.

A God. The Apoſtle calls it μακροθυμία, his *long-ſuffering*. 'Tis ſaid here to be *cum mora*, 'tis not a Reprieve for a few dayes: there is a gracious pauſe and delay, that God interpoſes and ſets to it, 'tis not ſpeedily executed.

Firſt, Come we to the firſt of theſe, that's *ſententia lata*; that's the firſt Ingredient into this compound and mixture in God's proceedings, that's an act of Juſtice, a Sentence is paſſed, and denounced againſt wicked men. And the Obſervation from hence is thus much; *Every wicked man and impenitent ſinner, is a man caſt in Law, the Sentence of Death and Condemnation is denounced upon him.* They may be forborn;
B but they are not forgiven: their Sentence may be delayed and ſuſpended; but 'tis not reverſed: they may for a time be reprieved; but they are not at all abſolved, they are all condemned men. St. *Jude* ſaith, they are προγεγραμμένοι Verſ. 4. Booked and billed up, and their names, and their ſins are enrolled in the Book of Condemnation.

And this dealing of God with wicked men, 'tis very particular; 'tis not in a ſummary way, or in groſs: but 'tis for *every evil work*. Not a ſin paſſes from thee; but God's Eye ſees it, and he takes notice of it; and he hath a Book of Remembrance, in which tis regiſtred, and a certain doom is paſſed upon it, and all the circumſtances and aggravations
C of thy ſins are diſtinctly recorded.

We muſt not conceive, that it fares with wicked men in God's proceedings, as it doth oftentimes with Malefactors here amongſt men. A man may commit ſome great offence, and yet keep himſelf out of the cognizance and reach of humane Juſtice. The fact may be unknown, or the party concealed, or the courſe of Juſtice ſtopt, or the Sentence be prevented; but none of theſe Caſes are incident in the way of God's proceedings. God hath a ſtanding Court of Judgment; there is no wickedneſs committed, but 'tis inſtantly diſcovered, and *ipſo facto*, the Law paſſes upon it, and a Sentence, 'tis enrolled againſt it immediately.

D For underſtanding of this Truth, we muſt know there is a double Sentence againſt every ſin.

I. Is *Sententia Legis*, the Sentence, that the Law denounces.

II. Is *Sententia Judicis*, the Sentence, which the Judge pronounces.

I. Is *Sententia Legis*; that's the very voice of the Law of God, condemning every ſin and tranſgreſſion. Thus 'tis ſaid, that *Moſes accuſed the Jews*, Joh. v. 45. I, and condemned them too. Not the Perſon of *Moſes*; but the Law of *Moſes*, that laid hold upon them, that arreigned and condemned them. So likewiſe the Goſpel, that paſſes a Sentence upon every unbelieving and impenitent ſinner. Hear that Sentence,
E *Joh.* iii. 36. *He that believes not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Yes, the Goſpel hath a curſe as well as the Law; *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus, let him be accurſed*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

II. Is *Sententia Judicis*, a Sentence which the Judge paſſeth upon a ſinner; and that is,

1. The ratifying of that Sentence, which the Law denounces, and the involving of the ſinner into that Sentence. *What is bound on Earth, is bound in Heaven.* 2. The

Sermon I.

2. The peremptory and final publiſhing, and declaring, and inflicting of the Sentence at the Day of Judgment. But the Sentence of the Law, that now paſſes upon every ſinner. The Scripture calls this Sentence the *concluding*, or *ſhutting up of a ſinner*, συγκλεισον. the word ſignifies to be *ſhut up under lock and key, to be kept in durance.*

Thus the Sentence againſt the firſt ſin, 'tis in full force ſtill againſt every impiety. That's the Original Writ that caſt us, and you may ſee the Temper of that, *Gen.* ii. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die. Adam* was *civiliter mortuus*; *dead in Law*, at the very inſtant of the Commiſſion of his firſt ſin. Had he not obtained pardon, he had been ſtill *filius mortis*, doomed to death by juſt and immediate Sentence. 'Tis ſo in every ſin; the day that thou doeſt it, thy doom is paſſed upon thee, thou muſt die for it. God's patience may reſpit the execution; but, without Repentance, the Sentence of Death is in full force, and ſhall never be reverſed. God's Patience and Juſtice may ſtand together. Forbearance with God, 'tis no forgiveneſs. See how the Scripture joyns both theſe together, *Exod.* xxxiv. 7. *The* Lord *is gracious, and long ſuffering*; but will *by no means clear the guilty.* So we have it in the Prophecy of *Nahum*, i. 3. *The* Lord *is ſlow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.* Reſpit them he may, not acquit, or pardon, and abſolve them.

Here is all the mercy, that impenitent ſinners ſhall find at God's hand; they may be the Objects of his patience and forbearance; but not of his abſolute remiſſion and forgiveneſs. St. *Paul* puts them together, *Rom.* ix. 22. *He endures with much long-ſuffering the Veſſels of Wrath, fitted to deſtruction.* There is ſuffering, and long-ſuffering, and much long-ſuffering; but yet for all that, if they repent not, they are *Veſſels of Wrath fitted to deſtruction.* God gives them a long day; but reckons with them at laſt. As they ſay, the King never pardons a Murtherer; but grants them a Leaſe of their life for ſo many years; the Sentence 'tis ſtill in force. Thus St. *Peter* tells us, *They are reſerved to the day of Judgment to be puniſhed*, and it may be ſooner, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. Thus S. *Paul* tells the *Gentiles*, Act. xvii. 30. That now God winks at their ſins; but *he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge them in righteouſneſs. Cain*, after he had murdered his Brother, God ſuffered him to live; but only as a man reprieved, he went with his Keeper; the Sentence of Death was out againſt him, and at laſt was executed. God in this caſe deals with ungodly men, as *David* did with *Joab*, and *Shimei*; he would not acquit them, but yet he forbore them; at laſt, gave order to *Solomon* to put them both to death. So God may uſe his patience for a time, ſuffer thee to live; but hath committed this to his Son, whom he hath made Judge of all, *Let not their heads come in peace to the grave*, put the Sentence of condemnation in full execution.

The conſideration of this Truth will afford a threefold Meditation to be laid to heart.

1. Is this ſo? is this the condition of wicked men? is there a Sentence gone out againſt them? Are they all caſt in Law?

Let

A Let the first Meditation be, *O quantum periculum!* O the danger that wicked men live in! they are all condemned men, their doom and sentence is passed, the Warrant for their execution, 'tis already signed; 'tis God's great mercy 'tis not forthwith executed, they are not sure of a day's respit. A man condemned in Law is not owner of his life; himself, his life, and all that he hath, are under forfeiture, they lye all at the King's mercy.

There are, that question the lawfulness of the title, that wicked men have to what they possess; and some over-rigorously say, They are thieves, and usurpers, and have no right to them. No, verily, that's
B a false and groundless opinion, and may prove the occasion of much violence and wrong. No, wicked men, they are *bonæ fidei possessores*; they have as much right to their goods, as they have to their lives. Thou mayst as well murther a wicked man, as defraud, or rob him. But yet my Text tells them, they are under a *sentence*. The right they have to life, and all their possessions, 'tis but *jus diminutum*, a title forfeited to God's justice; while God reprieves them, they lawfully enjoy them; but God may take the forfeiture at pleasure, out them of all, seize all into his own hands, and serve an execution of
C vengeance upon them. Here is the danger, that wicked men live in, the uncomfortable uncertainty of their state and condition. They are under an out-lawrie, can lay no claim to God's protection. They may cry out with *Cain*, *Every one that meets me, may slay me.* What *Benhadad* said to *Ahab*, may infinitely more justly be said by God to every wicked man, *All that thou hast is mine*, all is forfeited to my Justice. That's the first Meditation, *O quantum periculum!*

2. Is this the condition of impenitent sinners? are they all concluded under a sentence of condemnation? Let this be the second Meditation *O quanta stupiditas!* O the dulness and stupid carelessness of wicked men, not to be deeply affected with this woful condi-
D on; that they ly under the wrath of God, as condemned men, and not to be troubled at it! In matters of this life, if men incurr forfeitures, or be sued to an out-lawrie, or fall into a *Præmunire*, how do they startle and bestir themselves? Men in such cases are ready to follow *Solomon*'s counsel; if a man be got into bonds for another, how careful will he be to be disengaged? Thus *Solomon* advises, *Prov.* vi. 1. *My son, if thou beest a surety, thou art ensnared; do this now, my son, deliver thy self, give no sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids, deliver thy self as a Do from the hand of the Hunter, and as a Bird from the hand of the Fowler.* And men are generally ready e-
E nough to follow this counsel. But in our spiritual engagements and forfeitures to the justice of God, how few are affrighted with it! How should we cry out in anguish, and perplexity, as *Cain*, when he was condemned, and turned from the bar! O, now am I cast from thy face, a condemned man, every creature will be now *carnifex iræ divinæ*, ready to execute God's sentence upon me. 'Tis strange, that men should sleep securely in such a condition. How should men

speak

Sermon I.

ſpeak to their Souls, as *David* did? 1 *Sam.* xx. 3. *As the Lord liveth, there is but a ſtep betwixt me and death*; the Sentence is paſt, the Gibbet is ſet up; 'tis but, I, *lictor, obnubito caput*, 'tis but one word from God's mouth, and they will cover thy face, as they did wicked *Haman*'s, and diſpatch thee preſently. A

3. Is every wicked man under a ſentence of condemnation? then conſider a third Meditation; O the deſperate boldneſs and madneſs of wicked men, that ſtill add ſin to ſin, ſtill incurr more forfeitures, bring upon themſelves more ſentences of condemnation! We ſhould count him a deſperate Thief, that would ſteal when he ſtands at the barr, and looks the Judg in the face, and hears the ſentence of death denounced againſt him, and yet would have his hand in another mans purſe. Yet thus, and much more audacious are preſumptuous ſinners; they are already condemned, and yet will ſink themſelves into deeper damnation. *Belſhazzar* had little liſt to revel it, when he ſaw the hand-writing on the wall; though he did not underſtand it, yet at the ſight of it he trembled with horrour. Prophane men may clearly read their own ſentence of damnation in God's Book, and in the tranſcript of it in their own conſciences, and yet they abate not of their audacious ſinning. Wicked men in their jollity are like a ſort of condemned malefactors in the Gaol, that will roar and revel it in the mean time 'twixt their condemnation and execution. Such St. *Paul* ſaith, *Treaſure up wrath againſt the day of wrath.* Such tire out the patience of God; like *Shimei*, they forfeit their Reprieve, haſten and pull down their own death and deſtruction, make the fornace and fire of Hell ſeven times hotter then for ordinary ſinners. B C

You have ſeen the firſt Particular in the Text; therein the firſt Ingredient and mixture of Juſtice, that's *ſententia lata*, a ſentence is paſs'd upon every wicked work. Wicked men are ſentenced to deſtruction: now follows

Secondly, The ſecond Particular, the gracious allay of this ſevere proceeding, that's *temperatura miſericordiæ*; here is an Ingredient of ſome mercy and favour in the forbearance of ſinners. That I called *ſententia dilata*, the deferring of God's anger, the reſpite He gives to condemned ſinners; that which the Moraliſt calls πμοειας βραδύτης, the pauſing and leiſurely proceeding of God in puniſhing of wicked men. The ſentence is not preſently executed. D

'Tis worth the enquiry; Why doth God interpoſe ſo much delay 'twixt paſſing of ſentence upon ſinners, and the execution of it, and inflicting it upon them? Indeed amongſt men in humane Judicatures, there may be many incident caſes, and ſo many good reaſons why Sentence of Death ſhould ſtay and move ſlowly. *Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa*; Such delays amongſt men they are oft-times commendable. But no ſuch caſes of Delay are conſiderable in God's proceedings, none of them incident in the courſe of Divine Juſtice. E

1. *Inevidentia facti*, want of clear evidence puts men to a *melius inquirendum*, makes Jury and Judg to confeſs an *Ignoramus*, and enquire

A quire further into it. Such Obscurity may be in the Evidence, that may raise a scruple, and cause a delay. Obscurity in the Indictment may cause a delay in the Arraignment. It was *Job*'s holy care in matters of Judicature; *The cause that I knew not, I searched out*, Job xxix. 16. *Ignorantia Judicis, calamitas est innocentis*, *Aug.* An ignorant Judg passes many a wrong Sentence for want of due Information. But this case is not incident into God's Justice; He sees clearly into every particular, into all the passages of our lives and actions: and so he can be a swift witness against us, as he speaks in *Malachi*. The darkest corners of our Hearts are open and evident unto Him; *He is greater then our*
B *hearts, and knows all things.* He saw *Adam*, though he hid himself; He found out *Cain*, when no other accused him. *Achan*'s sacriledge was closely carryed; but God's eye was upon him. So *David* carryed his Adultery secretly, and his murder of *Uriah*; but God discovered him. *Elisha* could, by the Spirit of Prophecy, find out *Gehazi*'s corruption and bribery; *Did not my Spirit go with thee, when the man turned from his Chariot?* To God *all things are open and naked*: He can *search* Jerusalem *with Candles*, Zeph. i. 12. prie into the most concealed and secret sins. That's the first; So then want of evidence is no cause, why God should forbear to punish us.

G II. *Iniquitas Judicis*, some sinister aim of a corrupt Judg may cause some delay in executing of justice. We find this case in *Felix* the Governour of *Judea*; he was very slow in the trial of St. *Paul*'s cause, still delayed and put it off. What was the reason? he looked for a bribe, *Act.* xxiv. 26. *He hoped that money should be given him of* Paul, *that he might loose him, wherefore he sent for him the oftner, and communed with him.* There is such iniquity under the Sun. But this case, 'tis not imaginable in God's proceedings; no bribes can corrupt him, no gift out of the bosome can pervert his justice, or blinde his eyes: money bears no sway in that High Court of Justice.

D III. *Temeritas sententiæ*; Amongst men the Sentence may be unadvisedly denounced, and so call for more mature deliberation. This was *David*'s errour in the case of *Mephibosheth*, a lame impotent man, and so outstript by *Ziba*'s forwardness, and false suggestions. *David* weighed not all circumstances, gave an ear to *Ziba*, kept not another for *Mephibosheth*, but passed a rash sentence, and condemned *Mephibosheth*. But God is not subject to any such over-sights; he ponders all our actions, weighs every circumstance, there is no circumventing of him by any false suggestions.

E IV. *Præcipitatio passionis*. That's a fourth case, that should make a delay in execution of Sentence. There may be a mixture of too much passion in passing of Sentence, that may precipitate, and hurry a man forward to execute sentence. *Iram faciunt carnificem*, saith the Father; violent passions may cause violent proceedings. It was so in *David*; how passionately transported was he to revenge himself of *Nabal*? On goes his sword, like another *Jehu*, he

Sermon I.

marches furiously, he vows destruction to him that had wronged him. This was the great miscarriage of the Emperour *Theodosius* upon the Citizens of *Thessalonica*; they had committed a riot, and all in a fury, the Emperour commanded many thousands to be slain. To prevent more such furious proceedings, St. *Ambrose* advises him to make a law, that thirty dayes should pass between sentence and execution. But God is not liable to such transporting by passion; He proceeds calmly without passion, or perturbation. *Nihil puta à Deo subitum, quia nihil à Deo non dispositum*, saith *Tertullian*. *Fury is not in me*, saith God, *Esai.* xxvii. 4. It was a wise speech of an Heathen man, that forbore to punish his servants, because he was angry with them: Ἐυτυχεῖτε ὅτι ὀργίζομαι ὑμῖν. "'Tis well for you that I am now in a fit of anger, else I "would punish you. God feels no such fits or perturbations, and yet he forbears to punish sin.

V. *Impotentia exequendi*; that amongst men is cause of delay. Men must do as they can; sometimes they must be patient perforce; they want strength to punish, though they have just cause, and have a good mind to it. Twas thus with *David*, he had a strong desire to have punisht and put *Joab* to death for the murthering of *Abner*, 2 Sam. iii. but *Joab* was too potent, *David* dares not do it, *I am this day weak, though anointed King, and these men, the sons of* Zerviah *are too hard for me*; they had too strong a party in the Army, and amongst the Soldiers. But this case is not incident unto God; *The weakness of God is stronger then man*. He is able to repay the stoutest and strongest of them all. The people could rescue *Jonathan* from the fury of King *Saul*; but there is no rescuing a sinner from the hand of God. *Though hand joyn in hand*, (let them combine and associate themselves) *yet the wicked shall not go unpunished*, when God's time comes, *Prov.* xi. 21. God is strong and patient: men are oftentimes patient, because weak and impotent.

VI. There is yet another exigent amongst men, that causes delay in execution of justice, that's *Necessitas usûs*. Oft-times Kings are fain to connive, and spare, and forbear due execution upon Malefactors, because of some exigence of state; the party offending cannot well be spared; they are, otherwise, men of great abilities to do service, the Common-Wealth cannot miss them. An unseasonable check given to *Abner*, the *General of the host* (though it were for a foul fault) lost *Ishbosheth* the Kingdom, 2 *Sam.* iii. It made *Abner* forsake the house of *Saul*, and bring about the Kingdom to *David*. In humane affairs, piety and justice oft-times gives place to policy. But God is infinitely free from any such necessity of compliance. He stands in need of no wicked man's service; He can maintain his own cause, do his own work without the necessary use, or imployment of any wicked man. Why then should God forbear the greatest of them?

VII. There is yet another thing, that makes men slow in the punishing of offences, that's *Defectus zeli*, want of zeal against wickedness. Men are many times of *Gallio*'s temper, that can see wicked disorders, and little regard them; luke-warm, yea, key-cold in the execution

A cution of justice. They have no heart to contend with wicked men, they have no courage for the truth. 'Twas a rare virtue in King *Asa*, He *took courage, and put away the abominations that were done in the land*, 2 Chron. xv. 8. Such Governours are rare to be found. 'Tis God's complaint, and 'tis due to most men; *They are not valiant for the truth*, Jer. ix. 3. But God is a zealous God; he hates sin with a perfect hatred. His justice is, like himself, infinite and boundless. *Who knows the power of his justice?* He abhors wickedness, 'tis an abomination to him. There is in God an implacable antipathy against all ungodliness. And zeal is no *cunctator*, or slow-paced in the execution of justice. 'Tis
B said, *Phineas* was zealous, and how did he shew it? he presently took his javelin, and run through *Zimri*, and *Cozbi*, and dispatched them instantly. How is it then, that our zealous, our jealous God, who is justice it self, should thus delay the punishing of wickedness, and not strike presently? Surely he doth it for these Reasons.

1. He doth it *in gloriam Patientiæ*, for a glorious manifestation of his holy Attribute of Patience. His two great Attributes of Justice and Mercy, the full season of their manifestation upon the vessels of Wrath, and Mercy, is at the end, at the great day of reckoning. In the mean time, there are some glimpses, and appearances of them; but then they
C shall shine forth most gloriously. In the mean time, his long-suffering, and patience, shal have its perfect work. This life, 'tis the time of the Patience of God. This long-suffering, 'tis an Attribute God much glories in; and he loves it, and commends it in others. *The discretion of a man defers his anger*, Prov. xix. 11. Again, *He that is slow to wrath, is of great understanding*, Prov. xiv. 29. And God glories in it himself. He puts it among his own Royal Titles. St. *Paul* calls him *the God of patience*, Rom. xv. 5. 'Tis in his style of Majesty, *The Lord, the Lord, slow to anger. For my Name sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain it*, Esai. xlviii. 9. The Scripture expresseth his anger by
D this Phrase, *His anger was kindled*: 'tis not alwayes burning and flaming; it must be kindled first, and it will go out again, if it be not fed with the fewel of our provocations.

2. God strikes not presently, but forbears till afterwards *in exercitium fidei*; to teach men to live by Faith, and not by sense only, and present appearance. 'Tis the main rule of God's administration of the World, so to order, and carry things, that men may live by Faith, and perswade themselves there is a just and righteous God, though for the present he appears not to them. Eye-service is no service with him. Mankind then glorifies God, when they are perswaded of his Justice
E and Mercy, though for a time they do not see any manifestation of it. Faith will teach us to say with *Solomon*, *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged, yet sure I know it shall be well with them that fear the Lord, but it shall not be well with the wicked*, Eccles. viii. 12. This is the assurance that Faith gives us, *Say unto the Righteous, it shall be well with them; but wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with them*, Esai. iii. 10. If God should smite as soon as we provoke him;

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Senſe indeed would ſtartle, but Faith would be of no uſe. Here is the glory, that Faith and Religion gives to God, that we know he ſits above, and ſees all, and though the world be in an uproar, and they that work wickedneſs are ſet up, and God's ſervants perſecuted, yet we know God hath a day of reckoning. *Video, taceo*, is now God's Word, he holds his peace, but yet he laughs at them; he *ſees their day is a coming*, Pſal. xxxvii. The Heathen man could ſay to one that wronged him; *Non metuo, nè non ſis daturus pœnas, ſed nè ego id non ſum viſurus. The Lord reigns, be the people never ſo impatient; he ſits between the Cherubims, be the Earth never ſo unquiet*, Pſal. xcix. 1. Thus *Habakkuk* quiets the *Jews* in their perſecutions, that God's revenge upon *Babylon* will come in due time, though it tarry. *Wait for it, it will ſurely come, and the juſt ſhall live by his Faith*, Chap. ii. 3.

3. This forbearance of God, tis *actus φιλανθρωπίας*, a fruit of his goodneſs to the Sons of men, as they are his Creatures. Wicked men are the workmanſhip of his hands, and accordingly he deals with them in this life. *Corripit ut ſuum, non abjicit ut alienum*, Tertul. He doth not utterly forſake the works of his own hands. This ſparing and forbearing mercy, even the wickedſt Creatures have experience of it. Theſe two acts of goodneſs, *Tardiùs punit*, and *mitiùs punit*. He neither puniſhes ſpeedily, nor yet extreamly. *O Deum, etiam ad Inferos uſque miſericordem!* Even the damned in Hell finde this kind of mercy. This *David* acknowledges, *Pſal.* ciii. 14. *God is ſlow to anger, he knows our frame, he remembers we are but duſt*, able to deſerve that by ſinning, that we are not able to endure by ſuffering. This forbearance and moderation, *Eſai* declares, *Chap.* lvii. 16. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be wroth, for the Spirit would fail before me, and the Souls that I have made.* This conſideration moved God to reſpite *Niniveh*; ſo many thouſands of my Creatures, and all to periſh preſently! He would not do it.

4. This forbearance of God, 'tis *invitatorium pœnitentiæ*. Why doth God reſpite the wicked, forbear to puniſh them? 'Tis to give them opportunities to repentance. *Patientia*, 'tis *vagina juſtitiæ*; 'tis as the Scabbard, wherein he ſheaths his Juſtice. He will rather ſcare us with the Scabbard, then ſmite us with the Sword, to try if that may bring us to repentance. Thus ſpeaks God of *Jezebel*, Rev. ii. 21. *I gave her ſpace to repent.* Thus God in *Ezek.* iv. ſhews his patient expectation of the *Jews* repentance, by a type of beſieging their City, and yet lying ſtill on his ſide, not battering their walls, but waiting and expecting, if they would yield unto him. The Prophet was to lie on his ſide three hundred and ninety dayes; and every day ſignified an year: ſo long did he forbear, if yet they would repent. His forbearance, 'tis mainly for that end, *Rom.* ii. 4. *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God ſhould lead thee to repentance?* So St. *Peter*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. *The Lord is not ſlack, as ſome men count ſlackneſs, but he is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.* This long-ſuffering of God, 'tis to be accounted Salvation, *Verſ.* 15. And make

A make that uſe of it; as long as God reprieves thee, a Pardon may come, if thou labour for it. *De nemine deſperandum, quem patientia divina ſinit vivere,* ſaith *Aug.* As long as life laſteth, repentance is poſſible; He waits, *if at any time he will turn to him.* So *Eſai.* xxx. 18. *He waits to have mercy upon us. Patientia*, 'tis *pœnitentiæ expectatrix.* Patience in God, expects repentance from us.

If this prevail not; then,

5. God uſes this delay in puniſhing wicked men, *ut æquiùs & graviùs puniantur*; if they will not be reclaimed, then his patience hath this uſe and end; it juſtifies God's proceeding againſt them, and
B makes them the more inexcuſable. Had he preſently, ſuddenly ſtruck them down to Hell, it had been juſt; but now thus long to expect their Converſion, to wait upon the hardneſs of their hearts, to try if they will return, to hold open a poſſibility of entrance into Heaven. ſurely the contempt of ſuch patience muſt exceedingly juſtifie their condemnation, and make it moſt equal. If they return not, this patience makes them fill up the meaſure of their iniquity. All this delay bodes them no good; all this while the Pit is *digging up for the ungodly.*

Obſerve two wayes of the dealing of God's Providence;

C 1. He is patient towards wicked men; how long? till Heaven be filled with his Saints; when the number of his Elect is accompliſhed. Thus St. *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* iii. 20. *The long-ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah, while the Ark was a preparing*; when that was finiſhed, then came the Flood *upon the World of the ungodly.*

2. There is another dealing of God's Providence in chaſtening of his Children. How long ſhall that time continue? till Hell be prepared for the ungodly, *Pſal.* xciv. 12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, that thou mayeſt give him reſt from the dayes of adverſity, until the Pit be digged for the ungodly.* When Heaven is filled
D with Saints, and Hell with impenitent ſinners, there is an end of God's patience.

Come we now,

Thirdly, To the third Particular of the Text, that's *tractus dilationis*; How long this Sentence is delayed? That's ſet down in a general expreſſion, there is no diſtinct time prefixed. God's forbearance, 'tis during pleaſure, at his own diſpoſal. Sure we are, we are aforehand with him by our ſinning; whether ſooner or later, he will reckon with us, we know not; but yet he is patient: we know not when he will
E come, whether at firſt, or ſecond, or third Watch. This we know, he may require our lives preſently; 'tis his great mercy, we are yet on this ſide Hell, not already deſtroyed. The Text affords us more hope, aſſures us 'tis not ſpeedy. But yet how ſhall we eſtimate this leiſurely proceedings of God, and make it appear, that he is full of forbearance, and ſlow to puniſh, and take vengeance on ſinners?

We may judge of this patience and forbearance of God by theſe two eſtimates. 1. God

Sermon I.

I. God is not ſpeedy in puniſhing, he ſtays his hand, though there be many inſtances and exigents, that urge and plead for execution of vengeance. A

1. He doth not proceed to puniſh *ad exigentiam juſtitiæ.* God's juſtice, that calls for puniſhment; 'Tis *a righteous thing with God*, ſaith *Paul, to recompence ungodlineſs:* Yet for all that, ſtill he delays. Should he ſtrike preſently, 'twere due to his Juſtice; ſhould he forthwith ſink all Sinners into Hell, all mouths muſt be ſtopped, he were ſtill a righteous God, he would be juſtified, when he is judged. Well, though his Juſtice calls for puniſhment, yet his Patience for a time ſhall ſuperſede his Juſtice, and ſtay the hand of it; his Juſtice ſhall not yet take place, that his Patience may be magnified. B

2. He doth not proceed to puniſh *ad exigentiam æquitatis*; though equity calls for vengeance. He doth not puniſh, not only at the inſtance of ſtrict, and ſevere, and rigorous juſtice: but though it be moſt reaſonable, and equal to revenge, yet he forbears, even when equity it ſelf, that is, long ſuffering pleads for execution. After due forbearance, who can reaſonably plead for more time? *Three years have I come, and ſought for fruit, cut it down.* Nay, yet he will ſtay, and expect amendment. To magnifie this equity, he reports himſelf to their own conſciences, *Judge 'twixt me and my Vineyard*; Is there not evident equity to ſtub it up? and yet he ſpares it. After ſo many mercies ſhewed to them, after ſo many warnings given to them, after ſo many threatnings uſed againſt them, after ſo many convictions of their own conſciences, yet he will ſpare them. C

3. He doth not proceed to preſent puniſhment *ad exigentiam clamantium peccatorum.* Though all ſins deſerve puniſhment, yet ſome ſins are of that violent provocation, that they call loud for vengeance. The Scripture calls them *crying ſins.* Though ſuch ſins cry for vengeance in the ears of God, yet God oftentimes reſpits puniſhment, lengthens out his patience; *Cain*, his brother *Abel*'s blood cryed to God for vengeance in the ears of God, yet God forbore *Cain*, and reprieved him. The ſins of the old World were crying ſins, ſo that it repented God, *that ever he made man*, and yet he forbore them an hundred and twenty years. The ſins of *Sodom* were crying ſins, *Gen.* xviii. 20. yet God is content to deſcend to a Parly and Treaty with *Abraham* for the ſparing of *Sodom*. Could they have made good thoſe eaſie Conditions for them, that *Abraham* obtained, they had been ſpared. The perſecution of Gods Saints, the ſhedding of their blood, that's a crying ſin, that ſtartles God, yet even then, he remembers his patience, *Luk.* xviii. 7. *God will avenge his own elect, that cry unto him day and night, though he bear long with them.* Rev. vi. 9. *The Souls of God's Saints that were ſlain, cry to God; How long Lord, doeſt thou forbear to avenge our blood?* Anſwer was given them, *They muſt yet reſt awhile, e're God revenge them.* Nay, what ſay you to the *Jews* crucifying of Chriſt? that blood cryed for vengeance. When *they ſlew the Heir*, they themſelves grant, *Sure he will deſtroy theſe wicked men*, Mat. xxi. 41. Well, D E

for

A for all that they were ſpared, not forty dayes only like *Nineveh*, but full forty years e're that ſin was revenged.

4. God doth not proceed to puniſhing *ad exigentiam gloriæ*; though it be high time for him to maintain and vindicate his own glory, though that ſuffer, and be wronged for his forbearance, yet he delays. Oft-times God's glory ſuffers, by his patience, among wicked men. *Sua Deo patientia detrahit; plures enim Dominum idcirco non credunt, quia ſæculo iratum tam diu neſciunt, Tertull.* Men queſtion his Juſtice, yea, his Providence, and Deity for being thus patient. St. *Peter* tells us of ſcoffers, and mockers, that will ſport themſelves
B with this patience of God; *Where is the promiſe of his coming?* St. *Peter* is fain to clear God of ſlackneſs, he is ſo patient, 2 *Pet.* iii. Thus profane men in *Eſai* ſaid, *Chap.* v. 19. *Let him make ſpeed, and haſten his work, that we may ſee it*; here is much threatning, but nothing comes of it. Nay, not only wicked men mock at it, but God's own Servants are troubled at it. *Jeremy* he wondered at it, that God ſhould be ſo patient; *Why do the wicked proſper?* And *David* he was offended at it, it tempted him to give over his piety and religion; it wounded his heart to hear profane men ſay, *Where is now their God?* Yea, *Jonas*, God's own Prophet could object this forbearance to God,
C as if 'twere not for Gods own glory, or for the credit of his Prophet, to be thus patient. *Jonah* ſnuffed at God's patience, it diſpleaſed him exceedingly, and he was very angry: *Was not this my ſaying, when I was in mine own Countrey? I knew that thou waſt ſlow to anger*, threaten an hundred times, and never ſtrike, ſend us to threaten and denounce judgments, and then his patience interpoſes and ſets back all. That's the firſt Eſtimate. Though there be many inſtances and exigences that call for vengeance, yet God forbears, doth not preſently puniſh.

D II. Take now a ſecond Eſtimate of God's patient proceedings in puniſhing wicked men, and that ſhall be by way of compariſon in other of God's proceedings. He is not alwayes ſpeedy in taking vengeance on wicked men, he doth it ſlowly.

1. Compariſon is this, *Tardiùs quàm Angeli puniuntur*. The Angels that fell, though far more excellent Creatures then men, the chiefeſt of all the workmanſhip of God, yet no ſpace, or time of forbearance was given to them. No ſooner were they fallen into ſin, but forthwith they were immediately puniſhed, tumbled into Hell preſently, no patience uſed towards them. 'Tis the admiration of the holy Angels, and the envy and vexation of Devils, that God ſhould bear thus with ſin-
E ful man, and be ſo quick, and ſevere to thoſe excellent Spirits; thus to cruſh and grind to powder thoſe veſſels of Gold, and yet to ſpare and forbear baſe and vile earthen Pitchers. *Lord, what is man, that thou ſhouldeſt thus forbear him!*

2. Take a ſecond Compariſon, *Tardiùs quàm ipſius filii puniuntur*. 'Tis ſtrange, God often-times uſes more delay and patience towards wicked men, then he doth towards his own children. *Judgment oft-*

times

Sermon I.

times begins at the house of God, 1 Pet. iv. 17. So *Jer.* xxv. when God sends his Prophet with a *Cup of fury* into all the world, who must first drink of it? His own people, *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. See how quick God is with his own people, *Josh.* xxii. 18. *If ye rebel to day against the Lord, to morrow he will be wroth with the whole Congregation*. He will not suffer sin to lie upon them, but they shall smart for it. *David* observed this dealing of God, and was troubled at it, *Psal.* lxxiii. 5. *Wicked men*, saith he, *they are in no trouble, as other men, neither are they plagued like other men; but as for me, all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning*. God presently punished him, took him in his naked bed, and swing'd him soundly. How did God exercise his patience to *Balaam*, that false Prophet, that came to curse God's people? let him come, and go again, and did not destroy him; and yet how sharply and speedily dealt he with thee holy Prophet, that was sent by God to *Bethel*? for failing in one circumstance, a Lion slew him presently. *Moses* for omitting of Circumcision was in danger of death: How many profane men scorn God's Sacraments, and yet go unpunished? *Uzzah* more speedily and fearfully punished for a well-meant, unadvised touch of God's Ark, then the sacrilegious *Philistims* were for their great prophanation of it. Gods children feel the smart of his Rod sooner and oftner then many wicked men.

To shut up all. Is God thus patient to wicked men? Admire his patience, and make good use of it, but build not thy hope of Heaven wholly upon it. Rest not in this, that God forbears thee, sue for his forgiveness, place not thy salvation upon his forbearance. Forbearance, that we see may be the portion of Castaways; pardon and forgiveness, that's the portion of his Children. A man condemn'd, but yet for a time reprieved, makes use of this favour to sue out his pardon; otherwise 'tis cold comfort to be respited for a time, and then executed. God stays long e're he punishes, but at last he hits home, and revenges his enemies, if they do not submit. The Heathen Poet could say, Ὁ δὲ θεῶν ὀλυρὸν μύλος, ὀλυρὸν δ' ἄλεσμα. God's Mill is not alwayes going, but when it moves, it grinds all to dust and powder. Say not with the evil servant in the Gospel, *Matth.* xviii. 26. *Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all*: but let this be thy Prayer; *Lord, have mercy upon me, and forgive me all, abolish the hand-writing that is against me, cancel my Bond, reverse thy Sentence, pardon my Sins, say unto my soul, Thy sins are forgiven thee, thy peace is made up in heaven for thee*. Otherwise, 'tis not the space for repentance, but the grace of repentance, that must free thee from Hell, and deliver thy soul from the wrath to come.

A SERMON ON St. MATTHEW xi. 12.

And, from the dayes of John the Baptiſt untill now, the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

THis Chapter ſets out a Story of a Meſſage ſent unto our Saviour Chriſt from *John* the Baptiſt, being now in Priſon. The Parties by whom he ſent it, were two of his Diſciples. The enquiry they were to make, was, *Art thou he that ſhould come, or do we look for another?* that is, *Art thou the Meſſias, the Chriſt of God, and Saviour of the World?* A Queſtion, not ariſing out of any doubting in St. *John*, (he was too well grounded in that ſaving Truth, to call it into queſtion) but tending to the further inſtructing and informing his Diſciples in the knowledge of Chriſt.

John's preaching was like *Moſes* his Law, as an Under-School-maſter, or Uſher, to bring in men to Chriſt. He baptized none in his own name; he prepared his Auditors, as a chaſt Virgin to be eſpouſed to Chriſt. He was but the friend of the Bridegroom; as *Abraham*'s ſervant ſent to prepare a wife for *Iſaac*. He trains them not up for his own glory, but for the glory of Chriſt.

Chriſt having given ſatisfaction to *John*'s Diſciples, and diſmiſſed them, he enters upon an honourable commendation of *John* the Baptiſt: not to *John*'s Diſciples, they needed no encouragements to cleave unto him, they were but too much addicted to him, they envied Chriſt himſelf for the Baptiſts ſake, John iii. 26. *They ſay unto* John, *Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond* Jordan, *to whom thou bearest witneſs; Behold, the ſame baptizeth, and all men come to him.* The ſpirit that was in them luſted unto envie, no need to commend *John* Baptiſt to them. Nor doth Chriſt give this commendation to *John* in the time of his greatneſs and proſperity, when all men flocked after

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ter him, and *Herod* got him to the Court, and did obſerve and reverence him; ('Twas ſuperfluous then to commend him) but when the giddy multitude had forſaken him, and he was fallen into diſgrace at Court; when the Scribes and Phariſees contemned him, here is an end of all this great Innovation, he hath preached himſelf into priſon: *Herod* hath frowned upon him, and clapt him up. Now, when *John* is thus forſaken of all, Chriſt comes and maintains his honour and worth, advances him againſt all the diſgraces that were put upon him, tells the people the World was not worthy of ſuch a Doctour and Preacher to live amongſt them. A

How ſhould this encourage us in the ſervice of God, who will ſtick faſteſt to us when all the World forſakes us! Let the World ſlight, and contemn, and perſecute God's ſervants; yet Chriſt will honour and maintain their name, uphold their cauſe for them. St. *Paul* found this by good experience, 2 *Tim.* iv. 16. *At my firſt anſwer no man ſtood with me; but all men forſook me, notwithſtanding the Lord ſtood with me, and ſtrengthened me.* This made *Paul* to work out his heart in the ſervice of Chriſt. See how God and Chriſt both Glory in their ſervants. He writes their names not onely in heaven; but he erects monuments of their praiſe in earth alſo. Thus we ſee God glories of *Abraham*; *I know Abraham that he will teach his children and houſhold to fear me.* Thus alſo he magnified his ſevant *Job*, how there was *none like him in the earth.* So he maintains the honour of *Moſes* againſt *Aaron*, and *Miriam* repining at him; *My ſervant Moſes is faithful in all my houſe*, Numb. xii. 7, 8. *How durſt you ſpeak againſt my ſervant Moſes?* Theſe choice ſervants of God, like *David*'s Worthies, all their names are upon record. B C

But the main honour of all that Chriſt puts upon *John*, is this in my Text; the efficacy of his Miniſtry, the great good he did in the Church of God; *he turned many unto righteouſneſs*, he outwent the labours of many before him, he filled Heaven with Converts, at his preaching they thronged in: God gained much glory in the ſalvation of many: *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffered violence.* D

Ye ſee the ground of Chriſt's commendation. Many an Oratour would have paſſed over theſe, and pitched upon ſome other matters, his Honourable deſcent, and his miraculous conception, Chriſt overlooks theſe. We ſhould learn to praiſe as God praiſes; *He is approved whom the Lord commends*, 2 Cor. x. 18.

So then, the words report to us the great ſucceſs that God gave to *John*'s preaching of the *Goſpel*, the great zeal and forwardneſs of many in embracing Religion; the doing of that to which Saint *Paul* exhorts *Timothy*; *Fight the good fight of Faith, lay hold on eternal Life.* They ſet out unto us ſuch a Converſion as *Paul* wrought at *Epheſus*, Acts xix. 20. *So mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed.* E

And this great Converſion, 'tis ſet out by two particulars:

Firſt, Here is the date of this great work, together with the means how,

A how, and by whom it was effected: that's in theſe words, *From the dayes of John the Baptiſt, until now.*

Secondly, Here is ſet forth the greatneſs of this work, and the good ſucceſs of it; men were made earneſt and violent in labouring for ſalvation, and accordingly they attained it: that's expreſſed in theſe words; *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

Firſt, Come we to the date of this great work. It bears date from the dayes of *John* the Baptiſt. And this circumſtance hath many aſpects, looks divers wayes, and will afford us ſeveral Meditations.

B Theſe words,

Firſt, Have reference to Saint *John*.

Secondly, They reſpect the condition of the Church in Saint *John*'s Time.

Firſt, They reſpect Saint *John*, and

I. Put honour upon his perſon.

II. They put honour upon his Miniſtry.

III. They put honour upon the Age in which he lived.

I. Theſe words, *Since the dayes of* John *the Baptiſt*, they are words of much honour and reſpect to him; and they ſhew us what

C is that which will gain a man honour, and eſtimation, and praiſe with God, and that is to be an Inſtrument of doing much good. *John* is thus renowned and preferred before the Phariſees; nay, before the Prophets: becauſe he was ſo prevailing an Inſtrument of ſuch great converſions. With men uſually the getting of good (*If thou doeſt good to thy ſelf, men will ſpeak good of thee*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) but with God the doing of good is the matter of true praiſe. 'Tis the commendation that the Holy Ghoſt gave of *Barnabas*, Acts xi. 24. *He was a good man, and much people were added to the Lord by his means.* 'Twas that in which Saint *Paul* excelled all others, that would

D indeed be comparing themſelves with him; *He was in labours more abundant. I have laboured* (ſaith he) *more then they all*; he wrought mighty converſions.

And 'tis ſo in all other conditions of men. Doeſt thou deſire to treaſure up a good name amongſt men? Labour to do all the good thou canſt; let the Time and the Place thou liveſt in, be the better for thee. 'Twas *David*'s commendation which Saint *Paul* gives him long after he was dead, *Acts* xiii. 36. David *he ſerved his own generation by the will of God.* He was uſeful and beneficial to the times he lived in. How honourable is that commendation of *Nehemiah*, and

E how comfortable to him? *Remember me, O LORD, for the good that I have done to this people.* To be a *Joſeph*, a *Moſes*, a *Nehemiah*, to Gods people, 'tis the greateſt commendation.

II. Theſe words, *Since the dayes of* John *the Baptiſt*, they put honour upon his Miniſtry. *John*'s Miniſtry had this Prerogative, that he was the firſt that publiſhed and preached the Goſpel. And ſee here he carries the name of it. The beginnings of the Goſpel are reckoned

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We

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We have done with the date and ſeaſon, that was, *the dayes of* John *the Baptiſt*; we now come, A

Secondly, To the effect of *John*'s Miniſtry, how it wrought with the people: It had a wonderful and gracious effect upon them: It begat in them an earneſt and importunate preſſing into Heaven. 'Tis expreſſed in words of great vehemencie; *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

And in it are two things remarkable;

I. Here is their *Holy Endeavour*, they preſs upon it *with violence.*

II. Here is the *Happy Succeſs*, they *take it by force*, and are poſſeſſed of it. B

Firſt, Let us conſider the ſtrength of their endeavour, they *offer violence to the Kingdom of Heaven.* A ſtrange form of ſpeaking, that the Kingdom of Heaven ſhould be ſubject to any violent aſſaults! For Earthly Kingdoms, 'tis no wonder to ſee them ſurprized by violence; but Heaven is *a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken*, Heb. xii. Thieves cannot break in upon it, *Matth.* vi. What conſtruction ſhall we make of theſe words?

1. 'Tis no bodily violence that can be offered to it, as if we could take Heaven by ſtorming it; build up ſome *Babel* that may reach up C to Heaven, and ſcale the Walls of it; as the Heathen Poets fained of the Giants that waged War with their Gods. No, he that ſits in Heaven laughs ſuch Aſſaults to ſcorn. Heaven is not liable to ſuch *Onſets*. 'Tis no bodily violence.

2. Nor is it the hypocritical violence of ſome perverſe Zealots; whether right or wrong, do any thing, though never ſo unjuſt and unlawful, upon pretence of gaining of Heaven, and ſetting up of that Kingdom; the advancing of Chriſts Scepter, and to compaſs that, uſe any means, though never ſo unwarrantable, defraud, oppreſs, perſecute all that ſtands in their way. Such *Nimrods* there are in the D World, *mighty Hunters before the Lord.* Hunters, ye know, keep not in the Road, but over Hedge and Ditch, as their Game leads them; ſtick at nothing though never ſo lawleſs and violent, if it makes for their advantage. The Devil broached this Divinity betimes in the Church. Saint *Paul* cries out of it, *Let us do evil that good may come of it, whoſe damnation is juſt*, Rom. iii. 8. No, *God hates robbery for burnt-offerings*, Eſai. lxi. 8. *Will you ſteal, murder, and ſwear falſly*, ſaith God in *Jeremie, and then come and ſtand before me in this houſe*, as if you had been doing ſome ſervice for God? No, God can carry forward his own work, maintain his own cauſe, uphold E his own glory, without the ungodly and violent practiſes of ſuch Pretenders.

3. Nor is it the ſuperſtitious violence that ſome would offer to themſelves for the gaining of Heaven. Such frantick Chriſtians there have been; maiming, and diſmembring their bodies to fit them for Heaven. The great Council of *Nice* made a ſtrict Canon againſt

A againſt ſuch Superſtitions. And yet afterwards the *Circumcellions* in *Africa*, and other Donatiſts, thought, by murdering themſelves that they ſhould purchaſe Heaven. No, 'tis not the unlawfulneſs of violence, but the earneſtneſs of violence that is here commended; not an injurious violence, but an induſtrious violence. As elſewhere the Goſpel commends not the falſeneſs of the unjuſt Steward, but his forecaſt and providence. And Chriſt commends to our imitation, not the venom of the Serpent, but the wiſdom of the Serpent. *Be wiſe as Serpents, but innocent as Doves.*

So then, the point briefly is thus much, that *John*'s preaching
B wrought this bleſſed effect in his Auditors, and ſo ſhould the Goſpel work in us; it begat in them an holy violence, and ſtrong ſtriving to gain Heaven.

For the better underſtanding of this Truth, we will make theſe four Enquiries:

1. *Quibus mediis?* What were the means by which St. *John* wrought this eagerneſs in them to be thus violent?

2. *Quibus actibus?* Wherein doth this violence and earneſtneſs conſiſt?

3. *Quibus fundamentis?* What are the reaſons and grounds why
C this violence muſt be uſed?

4. *Quibus motivis?* What are the motives and inducements that may ſtir us up to it?

1 *Quibus mediis?* What were the means by which the Baptiſt prevailed thus with the People, to put them upon ſo earneſt a purſuit for the winning of Heaven?

We may conceive the means to be of two ſorts,

Firſt Sort of means were Doctrinal, ſuch as refer to his Doctrine and Miniſtry.

Second Sort were Perſonal, thoſe that refer to his life, and de-
D meanure.

I. There was that in St. *John*'s doctrine which enflamed his Auditors with a deſire of Heaven. There were three things in *John* Baptiſts Doctrine, that had a ſpecial efficacie upon the hearts of the people.

1. The firſt was, *vehemens reprehenſio*; *John* came not in the ſpirit of *Eli*, but in the ſpirit of *Elias*; uſed not a gentle reproof onely, but rebuked them ſharply. He was a ſharp and ſevere reprehender of all ſin and impiety. He was a Son of Thunder, he ſoothed up no man in his impiety: he ſpared not the Souldiers, not the Publicans,
E not the Phariſees, no not *Herod* himſelf. *O generation of Vipers!* there he doth ſharply reprove them. *The Ax is laid to the root of the tree*; there he doth as dreadfully threaten them. He convinces them of Sin, and he acquaints them with Hell, and the terrour of that puniſhment, and thus awakens them. 1. Men throughly convinced of ſin, driven out of all excuſes, affrighted with the threatnings of thoſe heavy puniſhments that will overtake them: ſuch men

are

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are likelyeſt to be wrought upon. *Reprove them ſharply, that they may be ſound in the faith*, ſaith *Paul* to *Titus*, i. 13. That, if any thing, may work upon them. The Scribes and Phariſees they would find fault with ſome Ceremonious Irregularities, and impoſe upon the people ſome outward expiations, which never entered into the Conſcience, or brought any ſpiritual trouble upon mens ſouls; but *John*'s word goes deep, he flaſhes Hell-fire in their faces if they will not repent. Such kind of Preaching will arouz men, and make them look about them. A

2. A ſecond thing obſervable in Saint *John*'s preaching, by which he prevailed thus mightily with them, was *gratioſa invitatio*, a ſweet and gracious invitation unto the Kingdom of Heaven. *John* doth not onely convince them, but perſwades them; not onely threatens them, but promiſes them; not onely ſcares them with Hell, but acquaints them with the hopes of *Heaven*, tells them, *the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*. The Scribes and Phariſees kept away the Key of Knowledge, but *John* ſets open Heaven Gates to them. *John* was *fibula legis & Evangelii*, as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks of him; as it were a mixt and compounded Miniſter of Law and Goſpel. By the one he drives them; by the other he draws them: he carries fire in one hand, and water in the other. I, hope of Mercy and Pardon will make Rebells come in and ſubmit themſelves. Perſiſt in your ſins, and Hell ſhall devour you: Repent, and turn to God, and Heaven ſhall receive you. That's a winning word; ſuch gracious aſſurances will work effectually with them. But then, B C

3. The moſt effectual means by which he prevailed, is *clara annunciatio Chriſti*, his clear and evident preaching of Chriſt, Δακτυλοδεικτῶ, he points out the *Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the World*. Here was *John*'s great advantage, he brings in the promiſed Meſſiah, the Author of Grace, preaches him more clearly and diſtinctly then any before. That, above all, is the converting truth. As 'tis ſaid of *Paul* and *Barnabas* their preaching of Chriſt, *They ſo ſpake, that a great multitude believed*, Acts xiv. 1. A full Moon makes a full Sea; ſo a clear and effectual preaching of Chriſt makes a full Church. All men will come into him that can ſhew him the Meſſias. The *Samaritan* Woman can bring out all the City with theſe tidings, *John* iv. 29. *Come, ſee a man that told me all things, that ever I did. Is not this the Chriſt? Then they went out of the City, and came unto him.* All the moral and ſubtile diſcourſe in the world cannot prevail ſo much, as *Ecce Agnus Dei! Behold the Lamb of God!* Joh. i. 29. *Believe in the Lord Jeſus*, Acts xvi. 31. This is the converting Truth, this little Leven will ſeaſon the whole lump; this little grain of Muſtard-ſeed will grow to a great tree; this one Spark will enflame the whole World; this ſmall Stone will grow to an huge Mountain. *Behold the Lamb of God*, makes mighty converſions. D E

Theſe

A These are the Doctrinal means by which *John* prevailed.

Secondly, There were *media perſonalia*, there were ſome acceſſory helps in his perſon, that advanced this work and made it ſo proſperous and prevailing with the people.

I. His conſtancy, he was a conſtant and reſolute Preacher of Truth. Chriſt gives him this Teſtimony, he was not a *Reed toſſed to and fro with every puff of wind*, guided his courſe by the motions of the heavens, not by the Weather-cock, altered not his copie upon any mans pleaſure. Neither the favour nor the frowns of *Herod* made him ſurceaſe the preaching of Truth. He was ſtrongly grounded in
B the truth committed to him, and did not depart from it; *Let them return to thee, but return not thou to them*, Jer. xv. 19. 'Tis a great means to convert others to Religion, to be well-grounded and confirmed in it our ſelves. It gives authority to what we ſpeak, when we can ſay with *Peter*, *We follow not deceitful fables, but what we have ſeen, and are well aſſured of.* As we may not aſſume to our ſelves an abſolute infallibility, ſo we muſt be far from a deſultorious levity in matters of Religion, not altering our Religion, as the World alters her faſhion. Miniſters muſt not be *bilingues*, not double-tongued, even in this ſenſe alſo, as *Athanaſius* ſpeaks, ſometimes ſpeaking one
C thing, ſometimes the quite contrary, but conſtant in their Profeſſion. Eſtabliſhment in the preſent Truth is a great inducement to others to embrace that Doctrine which we ſo conſtantly hold to.

II. A ſecond inducement that prevailed with the people, was St. *John*'s ſobriety, and gravity, and holy converſation. He was no delicate, voluptuous man, taken with pleaſures, not cloathed in ſoft and gaudy raiment, no flaunting Courtier; but grave, ſober, ſevere. His life, his food, his apparel, and all his demeanure, was a ſecond Sermon. The Wilderneſs fitted him to undergo the Court-life with-
D out luxurie, and to ſuffer, and endure the Priſon without tedioufneſs. Such a man gains great authority in the hearts of all men. As *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks, *Sanctorum aſpectus, & veſtium amictus, & calceorum mos*; a Chriſtians carriage and outward deportment ſhould be ſuch as may adorn the Goſpel, that the Miniſtry be not blamed, that the Goſpel be not evil-ſpoken of, that others may be won by the good converſation of Chriſtians. Saint *John* wrought no miracles, but his holy converſation was as effectual as Miracles, ſaith Saint *Auguſtine*, to prevail with the people.

III. A third inducement that won the people to embrace his
E Doctrine, was his great humility. Saint *John* might have been what he would, the people were ready to ſet him high, and to put honour upon him. He might have been taken for that great Prophet which *Moſes* foretold of: he might have been accounted *Elias* himſelf, not onely in Spirit, but in Perſon alſo. Nay, the People were ready to acknowledge him the Meſſias, the Chriſt of God. Saint *John* owns none of all theſe dignities, but diſclaims them all. Many

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an one would have aſſumed theſe offers, at leaſt have held the people in ſuſpenſe; it will make for the credit of his Miniſtry to be highly thought of: No, Saint *John*'s lowly ſpirit refuſes theſe advantages. He was expreſs in his anſwer, *he confeſſed and denyed not*, but tells them plainly, he was neither ſo, nor ſo; but a poor Miniſter of Chriſt, willing, but yet not worthy to do him ſervice. I, this will commend us to the Conſciences of all men, when we ſeek not our own glory, but the glory of Chriſt. Thus *Peter*, when he had wrought a Miracle, ſaith, *Ye men of Iſrael, why look ye upon us, as if our power or holineſs had cured this man?* No, the Name of Chriſt hath made this man whole, *Acts* iii. See this ſpirit of St. *Paul* 2 Cor. iv. 5. *We preach not our ſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and our ſelves your ſervants for Jeſus ſake.* A B

We have done with the firſt Enquiry; What were the means by which St. *John* prevailed with the people, and made them ſo zealous in the purſuit of Heaven.

Come we to the next Enquiry,

2. *Quibus actibus*, Wherein doth this violence and earneſtneſs conſiſt in purſuing after Heaven? It will expreſs it ſelf in theſe particulars.

I. It requires an high prizing, and judicious eſteeming of it: a valuing of Heaven, and the gaining of it above all other things. Will a man ſtrive, and toil, and purſue after that which he ſets naught by, and makes no reckoning of? That which is needleſs, is alſo worthleſs. *Quod opus non eſt eſſe, charum non eſt:* Cato. No, if thou beeſt ſlight in thy eſteem of Heaven, thou wilt be ſlow in thy purſuit of it. When the people had entertained a baſe report of the Land of *Canaan*, that it was not worth the labour, they concluded to return to *Egypt* again. But what ſaid *Caleb* and *Joſhuah*? *Oh! 'tis a good Land, let's go up and take it at once.* If thou accounteſt Heaven a Treaſure, then thou wilt ſearch for it. Poſſeſs thy mind with the holineſs and happineſs of that place; meditate on that glory that ſhall be revealed on thee, and it will make thee deſpiſe all other things, count them Dung in compare with Heaven; it will make thee think no labour or pains too great for the attaining of it. This put life into St. *Paul*, and quickned up his care, *Phil.* iii. 14. *I preſs toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* That's the firſt; Eſteem it highly, and thou wilt purſue it earneſtly. C D

2. A ſecond thing that makes up this holy Violence, is an earneſt deſire of it, when the longings of our ſoul are ſtrongly bent upon it. A cold faint wiſh that we may be in Heaven hereafter, when we are at leiſure, or can live here no longer, is far from violence, it will put no ſtreſs for it. No, we muſt fix our Will upon it, raviſh our hearts with the thoughts of it, enflame our ſouls with the deſire of it; as *David* did: *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after*, Pſal. xxvii. 4. Give over all other Wiſhes, ſo thou mayeſt E

A mayeſt attain to this longing. Thus the Spouſe expreſſes the fervencie of her love to Chriſt; *Oh! I am ſick of love.* The Scripture calls it hungring and thirſting. *Fames, quæ non faſtidit, ſed cibo pellitur.* It cannot be ſatisfied till it hath attained to it.

3. This violence for Heaven will put us upon an unwearied ſeeking, and enquiring, and purſuing after it. Violence in affection will beget in us violence in action. Thus *Solomon* ſets out the ſeeking for Heaven; *If thou cryeſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding; if thou ſeek for it as for ſilver, and ſearcheſt for it, as for hid treaſure.* It will make us importunate with God, take no
B denial; as the *Canaanitiſh* woman did with Chriſt; wreſtling with God for it, as *Jacob* did with the Angel: it will ſpare no labour or endeavour. Such endeavours are ſet out in Scripture in terms of vehemencie: They are called *the fightings of Faith*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. *The ſtrivings of Prayer*, Rom. xv. 30. *The wreſtlings of a Chriſtian*, Epheſ. vi. 12. See how Saint *Paul* expreſſes his violence, *Phil.* iii. 12. διώκω δὲ ἐπεκτείνομαι, *I purſue*, ſaith he, *and ſtretch out my ſelf.* It ſignifies the utmoſt ſtrains of the body to catch at any thing.

4. Violence will endure difficulties, venture upon dangers, run
C hazards to attain its deſires, leap over hinderances, break through every thing to gain Heaven. *The ſluggard ſaith, there is a Lion in the way. Sampſon* is reſolute, and goes out to meet it and grapple with it. *Caleb* and *Joſhuah* confeſſes the ſtrength of their enemies. What then? *Let's go up at once, and overcome them.* Such are the violent purſuers of Heaven. Tell *Paul* of bonds and impriſonment that do await upon him, 'tis no news to him, he looks for them. *We muſt through many tribulations enter into heaven. My life is not dear to me, ſo I may finiſh my courſe with joy*, Act. xx. 24.

5. Violence will ſhew it ſelf in a firm and faſt laying hold on that
D which it makes after. Such muſt be the apprehenſions of a Chriſtian. He that is violent for Heaven, will faſten upon it firmly, believe ſtedfaſtly, embrace the promiſes of it aſſuredly, unite to Chriſt inſeperably, intrench himſelf in his hope of Heaven impregnably. Thus the Spouſe, when ſhe found him whom her heart ſearched for, laid faſt hold on him, would not part with him; as *Eliſha* to *Elijah*, *As the LORD lives, and as thy ſoul lives, I will not leave thee.* Alas! how feeble are moſt mens apprehenſions of Heaven! They put all upon adventure, never work their hearts to any ſtrong aſſurances. What ſaith *Paul* to *Timothy? Fight the good fight of Faith, lay hold on eter-*
E *nal life*, 1 Tim. vi 12. And again, *Heb.* iii. 6. *Hold faſt the confidence of our hope firm to the end.* Violent purſuances will beget ſtrong apprehenſions, firm perſwaſions, undoubting reliances upon the promiſes of Heaven.

We proceed to the third Enquiry,

3. *Quibus fundamentis?* What are the grounds and reaſons of this violence? What neceſſity is there to uſe ſuch violence and

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earneſt endeavours for the gaining of Heaven? Surely there is much neceſſity for it every way: Take it in theſe five Particulars: A

1. The firſt is *naturalis diſtantia*. There is naturally a great diſtance and diſproportion 'twixt us and heaven. Were we Borderers, or born within the Confines of Heaven, we might more eaſily ſtep into it. But there is a great ſpace and diſtance 'twixt us and it, a great gulf that muſt be paſſed through. And this diſtance, 'tis not *diſtantia loci*, but *diſſimilitudinis*, a great diſproportion, and diſſimilitude 'twixt our nature and it. *Longè ſumus à te in regione diſſimilitudinis*, Aug. *in Confeſſ.* "We are far from thee, being ſo unlike to thee. That's heavenly, we are earthly; that's ſpiritual, we are carnal; that's incorruptible, we corruptible. Much ado there muſt be to fit fleſh and blood to inherit Heaven. Great pains required to raiſe up our nature to ſo high a condition, and to *make us meet partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. i. 12. That's the firſt ground, the greatneſs of the diſtance, it will coſt pains and travel to reach unto it. B

2. A ſecond ground why violence muſt be uſed, is *vitioſa contrarietas*. There is not onely a large diſtance, but a vitious contrariety that is in our ſinful nature, to the attaining of Heaven. There is not onely *aliquid ultra*, but *aliquid contra*, not onely a diſſimilitude, but an oppoſition and contrariety that muſt be overcome in us, which hinders us from Heaven. *Corruption cannot inherit incorruption: No unclean thing muſt enter into that holy place.* And 'tis no eaſie thing to ſubdue this contrariety that is in our nature, much labour is required to the effecting of it. Our nature is ſo corrupted, that Chriſt tells *Nicodemus*, we *muſt be born anew, or we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. St. *Paul* ſhews us this, *Col.* iii. 1. where he bids us, *Seek thoſe things that are above.* He ſhews us what it will coſt us, *Mortifie your members, which are upon the earth.* Mortifying, that's a killing word. We muſt offer an holy violence to our ſinful luſts. *Cut off thy right hand, pluck out thy right eye*, if it hinders thee from Heaven: thoſe ſins that are as profitable as thy right hand, thoſe luſts that are as pleaſant as thy right eye, theſe muſt be mortified. Try thy ſtrength but with any one ſin, thou wilt find it no eaſie matter to ſubdue and mortifie it. St. *Paul*, that great Proficient in this hard work of mortification, yet ſtill found it an hard and laborious task, *He beat down his own body and kept it in ſubjection, if by any means he might attain to the Kingdom of Heaven.* C D

3. A third ground for this neceſſity of violence, is *legalis excluſio*. It requires much ado to get into Heaven; we are all excluded by the ſentence of God's Law. Heaven-Gates ſtand ſhut againſt us: God hath placed a Cherub with a flaming ſword, that keeps the paſſage into Paradiſe. Do you think it an eaſie matter to appeaſe ſo angry a God, to get the reverſing of ſo ſevere a Sentence, to obtain admittance by that flaming ſword, and to get Heaven-Gate opened with E

A with a little knocking? No verily, nothing but earneſtneſs, and all poſſible importunity, can remove theſe obſtacles.

4. There is yet a fourth ground, *Evangelica difficultas*. Though the Goſpel gives us hope to enter into Heaven, yet upon ſuch conditions as require great violence and contention. Repentance: Oh! how painful is that to fleſh and blood! Believing of Myſteries which Nature conceives not: Oh! 'tis the hardeſt thing in the World to believe. The bearing of the Croſs, *We muſt through manifold afflictions enter into Heaven*: the hating of that which we moſt dearly love, if they hinder in this holy purſuit; the loving
B of thoſe whom we hate moſt bitterly, our deadly enemies: theſe Evangelical Duties are not eaſily performed, but with much pains and difficulty.

5. There is yet another neceſſity of violence, that's *inimica oppoſitio*: We muſt look for enemies that will oppoſe us. If thy face be towards Heaven, and thou makeſt that way, expect to be encountered with manifold Adverſaries. As *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks of *Elia*'s paſſage to Heaven in a fiery Chariot; Oh! how did the Devil, the Prince of the Air, ſtorm to ſee him paſſing through his Territory and Region! So will Satan way-lay thee, and ſtir up Enmities and Perſecutions a-
C gainſt thee. *All that will live godly in this preſent World, ſhall ſuffer perſecutions*, 2 Tim iii. 12. He that paſſes through an Enemies Country (ſuch is the World to a good Chriſtian) he muſt look for blows, he had need arm himſelf with courage, and break through with violence, and ſtrong reſolution.

Ye ſee the grounds why this violence is neceſſary, and it will yet further appear by the unſufficiency of thoſe falſe pretenſes, by which ſome bear themſelves in hand, that 'tis no ſuch hard matter to enter into Heaven, but exceeding eaſie.

(1.) As firſt, 'tis *in electione præparatum*, the Kingdom of Heaven,
D 'tis already prepared for us, we are ordained to it, *Mat.* xxv. 34. *God hath appointed us to eternal life, we are veſſels of honour.* True, 'tis *præparatum*, and yet *rapiendum*. 'Tis deſigned to us, and yet we muſt ſtrive for it. As it was in *Lot*'s deliverance from the deſtruction of *Sodom*, the Angel aſſured him he ſhould be delivered, and eſcape to *Zoar*; *I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither*: and yet *Lot* muſt beſtir himſelf; *Eſcape for thy life*, ſaith the Angel, *leſt thou be conſumed*, Gen. xix. 22. The Land of *Canaan* was a type of Heaven, that was a Land of Promiſe, God did abſolutely intend it them: but yet the people were to go up armed, it muſt coſt them blows to get
E the poſſeſſion of it. God's purpoſes do not exclude, but imply, and enforce our beſt endeavours. Chriſt tells us, *the Kingdom is prepared*; but yet before entry there muſt be feeding, cloathing, viſiting, much to be done, and that implies much to be ſuffered, Hunger, Nakedneſs, Impriſonment, manifold afflictions, much hardſhip to attain it.

(2.) But then ſecondly, the difficulty is overcome to our hands, 'tis

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'tis *in redemptione acquiſitum*, Chriſt hath overcome, and purchaſed, and poſſeſſed it for us. True, and yet we muſt be *violenti*, though we be *redempti*. We muſt diſtinguiſh *inter jus, & poſſeſſionem*. Our Title is good upon our Saviour's Purchaſe; but yet the Poſſeſſion is encumbred with many difficulties. The Leprous man had title to his houſe, but might not be ſuffered to enter into it till he was throughly cleanſed. Many conditions are ſtrictly required before preſent admiſſion. A

(3.) But then thirdly, theſe conditions are mitigated and qualified, 'tis *parvulis, & infirmis promiſſum*. Weak Repentance, if it be true; imperfect Faith, and our honeſt Endeavours, will be accepted. True, we may be weak ones, and yet muſt be violent. B

I. The leaſt grain of Grace is not eaſily got. *Diu flevi, ut ſeſe intùs mihi perſuaderet*. It coſt *Auguſtine* tears and prayers to attain to any meaſure of true Grace. *O ye of little Faith*, ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples, after ſo much teaching, ſo many miracles to confirm and ſtrengthen them.

II. A weak Faith muſt be a ſtriving Faith; as the Apoſtles begged of Chriſt, *LORD encreaſe our Faith*; as the poor man in the Goſpel begged it with Tears, *LORD, I believe, help my unbelief*.

(4.) But then all theſe ſtruglings and ſtrivings may be prevented, Heaven may be *in momento acquiſitum*; ſome have ſtept into Heaven in an inſtant. As the Thief upon the Croſs, upon his firſt prayer to Chriſt, Heaven was beſtowed on him. True, it may be ſudden, but then it muſt be violent. That rare, extraordinary Convert, uſed great violence. C

I. *Vis contra conſuetudinem*, to alter ſo ſuddenly, after ſo long a cuſtom in ſinning, argues great violence.

II. *Vis contra tentationes*; to overcome ſo many temptations as that holy Thief did, argued great violence. His fellow-Thief blaſpheming, all the people reviling of Jeſus, our Savionr's great ignominie which then he ſuffered; to break through all theſe diſſwaſions of Faith, requires great violence. D

III. The leſs time, the greater violence. To do that in an inſtant which the Saints have been doing all their life-time, was no eaſie performance. *Maximum ſpatium minimo tempore conficere, is motus velociſſimus*, ſaith the Philoſopher: He that can rid ſo much way in ſo ſmall a time, muſt beſtir himſelf mightily.

Which, if it be ſo, that ſuch violence is required for the obtaining of Heaven, let me ask your Conſciences three Queſtions.

Firſt, What will become of thoſe remiſs, ſlothful, perfunctory Chriſtians, that count a little ſlight, formal Religion, without any life or alacrity, will do the deed? Surely ſuch Seekers as they, will fall ſhort of Heaven. What ſaith *Solomon*? *Strong men attain riches*. Who ever proſpered in any trade of life by ſuch poor endeavours? which is all that ſuch men beſtow for Heaven. E

Secondly, If ſuch violence be requiſite for gaining of Heaven, what will

A will become of thoſe that wholly neglect it, never mind it? Let them take Heaven that liſt, they never buſie their thoughts about it: in what caſe will they be? What ſaith our Saviour, *Luke* xiii.24 *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight Gate, for many ſhall ſeek to enter in but ſhall not be able.* If ſome *Seekers* ſhall miſs of it; they that regard it not, ſhall never attain it.

Thirdly, What will become of violent oppoſers, if onely violent ſeekers ſhall gain it? They that ſet themſelves violently againſt it, in what caſe will they be in? Cry down Religion, Mockers, and Scorners of all true Piety: let ſuch conſider that ſad ſaying of St. *Peter*,
B *If the righteous be ſcarcely ſaved*, not without much ado, what will become of thoſe that reject the Goſpel?

Laſtly, *Quæ motiva?* What motives are there to ſtir up this violence in gaining of Heaven?

I. Conſider the *Price*, 'tis a *Kingdom.*

II. Conſider the *Succeſs*, they ſhall *ſpeed.*

III. Conſider the *Loſs*, if thou *faileſt.*

I. Conſider the *Price*, 'tis a *Kingdom*, worth the ſtriving for. Crowns and Scepters will be a good recompence for ſtrivings and fightings. And this conqueſt, 'tis not like our conqueſts in this world.
C Here the chief Commander gets the Kingdom, the other Soldiers muſt be content with inferiour rewards. But in this Warfare, every valiant Soldier ſhall be a Conqueror, every Conqueror ſhall be a King. *Rev.*iii.21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne*, ſaith Chriſt. Who will not beſtir himſelf to gain a Kingdom?

II. Conſider the *Succeſs*; *The violent take it by force.* They are ſure to ſpeed. In our earthly fightings there often falls out many *diſappointments*; but never any man ſtrived for Heaven indeed, that ever miſſed of it. We fight not as uncertain, but are ſure to ſpeed, if we faint not. *Pugna, adjuvabo te; vince, coronabo te:* Auguſtine. *Fight,*
D *I will aſſiſt thee; overcome, I will crown thee.* In earthly purſuit, there may be failings. *The Race is not to the ſwift, nor the Battle to the ſtrong*, Eccleſ.ix.11. But no man that ſought Heaven in good earneſt, did ever miſs of it.

III. Make ſure of Heaven, or elſe let me tell thee, Hell will make ſure of thee. Haſten to *Zoar*, or elſe periſh. We cannot ſay with the two Tribes; *We will ſtay on this ſide* Jordan, not fight for *Canaan. Regnare nolo, ſufficit mihi ſalvum fore.* No, if Heaven do not receive thee, Hell will certainly lay hold upon thee.

E

A SERMON ON

St. MATTHEW iii. 10.

And now also the Ax is laid to the root of the trees: Therefore every tree, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen down and cast into the fire.

SAint *John* the *Baptist* is by some of the Fathers, called *Fibula Legis, & Evangelii*, the Clasp that unites the Two Testaments. In his Person and Office, the Law and the Gospel both joyned and met together. In respect of the Law, so he is called a Prophet, the last Prophet that immediately foretold Christ's coming and manifestation; his Father *Zachary* terms him *The Prophet of the Highest*. He was *Elias redivivus*, a second *Elias* raised up to the Church. In respect of the New Testament, so he was an *Evangelist*, pointing out and discovering the Messias already come and exhibited.

He bore a double Office.

First, He was a Messenger sent before Christ; *Malac.* iii. 1. *Behold, I will send my Messenger to prepare my way.* That was his Prophetical Office, as belonging to the Old Testament.

Secondly, He performed the Office of an Usher, attending upon the Person of Christ, proclaiming his coming, pointing out his presence; *Behold the Lamb of God* actually exhibited. So he was an Evangelist and Minister of the Gospel.

And as he was a Forerunner in his Person and Office; so he was in his Doctrin. The Doctrin of *John*, it was a Doctrin of Preparation, and that's the Doctrin of Repentance. The aim and scope of his Preaching was *to call men to Repentance*. His Baptizing is called *The Baptism of Repentance*, Mark i. 4. Yes, Repentance is that which fits and prepares men for the entertaining of Christ. The Apostle calls it *The Doctrin of the beginning of Christ*, the *first Principle of* Christianity.

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anity. *Repentance from dead works*, 'tis the laying of the first Foundation, *Heb.* vi. 1. The Prophet *Jeremy* compares it to the first plowing of the Land, before the seed be cast in, *Jer.* iv. 3. *Break up your fallow-ground, and sow not among thorns*. To preach Christ, and salvation by Christ, before Repentance, is to sow your Land before you plow it, and that's preposterous. The same Prophet compares it to Circumcision; *Circumcise the foreskin of your hearts*. Under the Law, no uncircumcised person might eat the Pass-over. *Let him be first circumcised, then he might eat of it*, Exod. xii. 44. So no impenitent man can have his part in Christ; let him first be penitent, then let him lay hold and believe in Christ. A B

Now the Baptist stirs up his Auditory to the practice of Repentance by a double Motive.

First, The first is of the nature of an Attractive.

Secondly, The second is of the nature of an Impulsive.

First, The Attractive, that's more winning and gracious. He uses a sweet invitation, to encourage them, that's the promise of Mercy and Salvation; Verse 2. *Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand*: that's a motive to draw them. But then, because he met with Hypocritical and obstinate Sinners, for them he hath another motive, and that is, C

Secondly, An Impulsive, a motive of Terror. If the inducement will not draw us, the affrightment must drive us. *Some save with fear, pulling them out of the fire*, saith St. *Jude*: that's the denouncing of judgment and destruction. *The Ax is laid to the root of the Tree*, saith St. *John*; as if he should say, "Repent, and behold! Heaven-gate is "open to receive you; repent not, and Hell-gates are wide open to "devour you: Repent and the Kingdom of Heaven shall receive you; "repent not, and the Kingdom of Hell is ready to destroy you.

The Text then you see, 'tis an instant and vehement calling to Repentance, enforced upon us by the threatning and denouncing of a dreadful judgment. And in it take notice of two things. D

First, Here is a Judgment threatned, *The Ax is laid*.

Secondly, Here is a Condition annexed; and that's a description of those against whom it is denounced; those that are barren and unfruitful trees, that bring forth no good fruit, they must expect and undergo that judgment, *The Ax shall hew them down, the Fire shall consume them*. Thus, as before the *Roman* Magistrates, the Officers carryed *Virgas & Secures*, a bundle of rods, and a sharp Ax: so we see *John* Baptist, this *Ante-ambulo Christi*, the Usher and Officer of Christ, he comes before Christ, not only with rods and chastisements, but with an *Ax* of destruction, to hew down and stub up, unfruitful and unprofitable Christians. E

First, The Judgment; that is specified and represented by way of Similitude, under the type and resemblance of a Metaphor.

First, For more lively expression. The Similitude of Trees is frequent in Scripture. Such was *Jotham*'s Parable about the Trees in

Libanus,

A *Libanus*, in the Book of *Judges*. Thus *David* compares a good man to a *fruitful Tree*, Pſal i. 3. the proſperity of a wicked man, to the *flowriſhing of a Bay-tree*, Pſal. xxxvii. 35. the righteous man to a *Palm-tree*, Pſal. xcii. 12. The Church is compared ſometimes to a *Fig-tree*, Luke xiii. 6. Sometimes to a *Vine-tree*; *Eſai* calls the Church of God, *His pleaſant plant*, Eſai. v. 7. And God makes uſe of theſe Similitudes, as ſenſible, and ſo more conceivable repreſentations of his ſpiritual and eternal puniſhments. God's Judgments, eſpecially thoſe in Hell, are inconceivable to us now in their own nature. What the Prophet ſpeaks of the joyes of Heaven, is moſt true
B alſo of the torments of Hell; *Eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive, what thoſe fearful* things are, which God hath prepared for impenitent ſinners. Therefore to make us more apprehenſive of them, he uſes theſe bodily and ſenſible repreſentations, *Gnawing of Worms, flames of Fire, rivers of Brimſtone, cutting down, ſtubbing up by the roots, and caſting into Fire.* But,

Secondly, This Similitude, which the Text here uſes, is purpoſely choſen, as carrying an intimation of three things.

I. It ſhews God's Sovereign dominion over us; we are in his
C hand and diſpoſal, as the Trees are in the power of the owner, and Lord of the ſoil. We are all his Plantation; he may make us trees of the Forreſt, if he pleaſes, ſet us in a waſte and dry Wilderneſs, he hath done ſo with many other Nations; or as he hath done for us, plant us in the Garden and Paradiſe of his Church. If he hews and cuts down, if he ſtubs and roots up, who can ſay, *Why doeſt thou ſo?* Thus God aſſerts his Power over the *Jews* by the ſimilitude of a Potter, and his veſſels of clay, *Jer.* xviii. 6. *O houſe of Iſrael, cannot I do with you, as the Potter with his clay? Behold, as the clay is in the Potters hand, ſo are ye in my hand, O houſe of Iſrael.* And St. *Paul* makes uſe of this
D ſimilitude, thereby ſilencing of mens murmurings againſt Gods proceedings; *Rom.* ix. 20. *O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou formed me thus? Hath the Potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel unto honour, and another to diſhonour?* That's the firſt intimation, God's ſovereignty over us. This Similitude,

II. It ſhews the Juſtice and Equity of his proceedings. To cut down a barren and unfruitfull tree that cumbers the ground, the Rules of good husbandry tells us, 'tis reaſonable. To weed up noyſom herbs, to cut up thorns and nettles, to ſtub up a dead or a dry
E tree, that's become good for nothing, but for the fire, who pleads to have it ſpared? God appeals to man's equity in this caſe, *Eſai.* v. 3. *O men of Judah, judg I pray you, 'twixt me and my vine-yard*; after all my coſt and pains, 'tis ſtill barren and unprofitable; why ſhould I not disburthen the earth of it? fit for nothing, but the fire. Thus Chriſt avowes the juſtice of God in the deſtruction of the *Jews*, Luke xii. 7. *Behold theſe three years I come ſeeking fruit*

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on this Fig-tree and find none; cut it down, why cumbers it the ground? That's the second intimation. This similitude,

III. It shews the nature of God's judgments. The destruction, which is here threatned to the *Jews*, was not only a spiritual and eternal, but a temporal destruction; an utter dispeopling of that Nation, the rooting them out from being a people, and it was done by the Armies of the *Romans*, that brought a final destruction upon *Jerusalem*. What were they in God's account? They were *securis in manu Dei*, but as an Ax in God's hand. 'Tis God that strikes, and hews, and cuts down; men are but instruments. As in the planting of the Church, men are but God's instruments. *What is Paul? what is Apollo? but Ministers by whom ye believed?* 1 Cor. iii. 5. *Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.* So when he doth unchurch a Nation, and brings ruine upon it, he is the Master of the work. 'Tis his arm that smites; all creatures are but means and instruments of his vengeance. *Esai.* x. 5. *O Assyria, the rod of mine anger, and the staff of mine indignation; shall the Ax boast it self against him, that hews with it?* Thus the Prophet calls the King of *Babylon*, *God's Battle-ax*. Let those that destroy God's Church pride themselves in their successful prevailings, St. *Augustine* tells them, they are but *iræ divinæ carnifices*, he assignes them only the Hang-mans office; they are but the executioners of God's wrath on his people. 'Tis he that bids *the sword, Go thorow the land*, Ezek. xiv. 17. and he can recall it.

In particular, the Judgment which the Text threatens, is made more terrible by four Aggravations:

1. Is the nature of it, 'tis an *Ax*; that's a destroying instrument.

2. Is the use of it, 'tis actually *laid to*; that's an imminent danger, a close application.

3. 'Tis *ad radicem*, 'tis *laid to the root*, that's a deadly part. Stub up the root and all is gone.

4. 'Tis, *'Tis now laid*; the time is present, and so the judgment unavoidable.

For the understanding of the words we must make these three Enquiries.

First, *Quid Arbor*, what is meant by the *Tree*?

In General we may understand by it every man; but yet, more properly, this *tree* is *arbor plantata*. Not so much man in his natural condition, as it were a tree or wilding in the Forest; or, as St. *Paul* calls it, *a wilde Olive-tree*: but 'tis purposely meant of a tree in God's Garden or Orchard; that is, a man living in the Church of God, such, as *David* describes, *Psal.* xcii. 13. *Those that are planted in the house of the LORD, those that are set in the Courts of our God.* Under the Old Testament, the *Jews*, and so in proportion, we that live in God's garden and nursery, we that are Christians; those are the trees that God deals withal here in my Text. *Esai's Vine*, Esai. v. our Savious *Fig-tree*, Luke xiii. *A vine-yard in a very fruitful hill*; Christians living within the Church, under the means of grace. The second Enquiry is:

Secondly,

A *Secondly*, *Quid radix?* what is meant by the *Root?*
And we may reſolve it into a threefold ſenſe.

I. It points out the *Jews* original. They gloryed that they were the off-ſpring of *Abraham*, Verſ. 9. *We have Abraham to our Father:* and ſo it ſignifies their natural deſcent and propagation. *The Ax is laid to the root*; they ſhall be cut off from the privilege of their birth and original, in which they boaſted; God will no more eſteem them the *ſeed of Abraham*. Thus God in *Ezekiel* rejects them as degenerate baſtard-ſlips, not *Abraham's* progenie: *Thy Father is an Amorite, thy Mother an Hittite*; the brood of curſed *Cham*, not of the linage of
B *Abraham*.

II. The *Root*, it points out their external profeſſion; they were Members of the viſible Church; *Salvation was of the* Jews. They were the people of God ingrafted into the *true Olive-tree*. Well, let them not glory in that Privilege, *The ax is laid to the root too*; their external profeſſion ſhall fail them: the viſible body of the Church ſhall be deſtroyed, the Candleſtick ſhall be removed, God is writing a bill of Divorce againſt them: they are *Lo-Ammi*, and *Lo-Ruamah*, as *Hoſea* terms them, *no more God's people, God hath no more mercy upon them.*

C III. The *Root* is the vital part, the fountain of life, that by which the tree ſtands, poſſeſſes the ſoil, lives, and flouriſhes. Then the *Ax to the root* is a deadly Judgment, renting them from their place and poſſeſſion. The Land ſhall ſpue them out: *their place ſhall know them no more*; *their Country ſhall be laid waſte*, ſuffer a final, utter deſolation. That's the ſecond Queſtion. The third Enquiry is;

Thirdly, *Quid ſecuris?* what is ment by the *Ax?* Expoſitours are various in their opinions. St. *Gregory* by the *Ax* underſtands *Chriſt*. "Chriſt, ſaith he, coming in the Church, is an Ax brought into the "Orchard. *Divinitas ferrum, Humanitas manubrium*: His Humanity
D was as the helve or handle; his Divinity that's as the hatchet. The ſharp edg of that doth cut and pierce. Some ſay, that the Goſpel is meant by this Ax. That's St. *Hierom's* apprehenſion of it. It hath a ſharp, cutting, and piercing power in it. That's a property very agreeable to the Word of the Goſpel. *I have hew'd them down by the Prophets, I have ſlain them by the word of my mouth*, Hoſ. vi. 5. Other Expoſitours underſtand by this *Ax*, *ultionem, & judicium divinum*; God's fierce wrath and vengeance, his judgments bringing deſtruction. Indeed all theſe put together, make up one compleat ſence of the words: Chriſt, the Goſpel, and Vengeance. Chriſt, he holds this Ax in his
E hand; the Goſpel, that ſharpens the edge, haſtens and enforces the ſtroke; and then final deſtruction, that's the blow that is given. So then, put them all together, and then we may take notice of theſe two things:

I. The nature of the Judgment, which is here threatned, 'tis *ſecuris ad radicem*, 'tis an *Ax laid to the root.*

II. The nearneſs of this Judgment; nay, more then ſo, the preſentneſs

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ſentneſs of the danger; tis *nunc appoſita*, 'tis now already laid to and applyed. God is now fetching of his blow, his Arm is lifted up, the ſtroke is giving to cut down and deſtroy them. A

I. Let us conſider the nature of the Judgment that is now threatned, 'tis *an Ax at the root*. And we may conceive it by two references or compariſons.

1. By comparing this Judgment *ad gladium oris*, to the *Sword of God's Word*; that's a cutting and wounding Weapon. And then Obſerve, *Thoſe that are not wrought upon, whoſe hearts are not pierced and wounded by the Sword of God's Word, they ſhall be cut down and deſtroyed by the Ax of his Judgments*. Indeed the kindlieſt way to convert us, and to call us to Repentance, is the Miniſtry of his Word, the call of the Goſpel. God alwayes begins with that firſt, and his Patience continues that means, as long as there is any hope to do good by it. But when that works not with us, we blunt and turn the edg of this, it cannot enter. Then God is enforced to ſend Judgments upon us. This was his method and dealing with the Jews, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 25. *He ſent to them by his Meſſengers, riſing up betimes and ſending them*: and this he did, *till there was no remedy*. Mark that word, *Verſ.* 16. *Till there was no remedy*; *Nothing elſe* would prevail, *therefore he brought upon them the* Caldeans, *ſent them into Captivity*. Indeed could the Word alone prevail with us, God would not lay upon us the leaſt affliction. He *takes no delight in afflicting the Sons of Men*. The Church acknowledgeth it in her Captivity, *Lam.* iii. 33. *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men*. As a skilful and careful Phyſition uſes all gentle and fair means firſt to recover his Patient: but if they will not do, then he muſt proceed to more violent courſes, lancing, and ſearing, and cutting off. Thus the Lord ſhews how loth he is to come to courſes of extremity; *Hoſ.* vi. 4. *O Ephraim, what ſhall I do unto thee? how ſhall I make thee as Admah? I have hew'd them by the Prophets*, but it hath done them no good; *I have writ unto them the great things of my Law, but they accounted them as a ſtrange thing*; they would not own it, or take warning by it. What ſaith God in ſuch a caſe? *Eſai.* i. 24. *Ah! I will eaſe me of mine Adverſaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies*. If the Word cannot prevail, the Ax ſhall deſtroy us. B C D

2. There is a ſecond compariſon of this Ax, *ad cultrum amputatorium*, that's to the pruning knife applyed to the boughs. Leſſer Judgments and Chaſtiſements, God hath uſed them, and they prove unſucceſsful; then he takes the Ax into his hand, and brings an utter deſtruction. Obſerve, *Thoſe that are not bettered by the pruning knife of God's Chaſtiſement, and more gentle corrections, they are forlorn and deſperate, nothing can be expected by them, but the Ax of deſtruction*. 'Tis the method of God's proceedings with men. He begins in a more gentle way, by eaſier corrections, tries if they will do good, but if they work no Reformation, but ſin grows obſtinate and incorrigible, then he layes the Rod aſide, then he muſt look for conſuming Judgments, E

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A ments, utter deſtruction. Ye may ſee this in the caſe of *Sodom*. Firſt, he ſent a Preacher amongſt them, *Lot*, a holy man, a *Preacher of Righteouſneſs*, he reproved their abominations; well, they ſlighted that means of Converſion, yet God forbore them; then he takes the Rod into his hand, ſends an Army of Enemies amongſt them, *Gen.* xiv. 1. *Chedorlaomer* makes war againſt them, and takes them captive. God ſcourged them with that Rod; tries what good that will do upon them: but they are not bettered by it, they go on ſtill. Then God comes with his *Ax* in his hand, ſtrikes at the root, rains down fire and brimſtone upon them, overthrows them with a final and dreadful deſtruction. This
B courſe likewiſe God took with *Ahab*. Firſt, he ſends his Prophet *Elijah* to reprove him; that ſucceeded not, he deſpiſed his Miniſtery: Then he ſends the King of *Syria*, affrights him with that Army, yet that reclaims him not; then God ſends a Dearth into his Land, *it rained not for three years and an half*, that prevails not; then *Ahab* is *ripe for deſtruction*. *Now, who ſhall cauſe him to fall at Ramoth-Gilead?* Then God ſweeps him away as dung from the Earth. The like courſe God took with the Church of the *Jews*. Firſt he furniſhed them with Prophets, that called upon them, but they turned the deaf ear to them; then ſcares them with the approach of Enemies, beſieges
C them by the *Caldeans*, that ſtirs them not; then come Earthquakes and Famine, that betters them not; then carries them to *Babylon*, ſends them into Captivity, yet they vex and grieve his holy Spirit: All theſe prunings and dreſſings proved but loſt labour: At laſt he comes with a deſtroying Weapon, the *Ax* of Deſolation and final Perdition.

1. It ſhould teach us to anſwer God's viſitations in the beginnings of his diſpleaſures, to learn his meanings in his gentler Corrections; *when his wrath is kindled but a little*, as *David* adviſes, *Pſal.* ii. 12. Chriſt counſels us, *Sit down and conſider, whether thou beeſt able to meet him that comes againſt thee with twenty thouſand*
D *Judgments*. *Know*, ſaith the Prophet, *'tis an evil and a bitter thing* thus to ſtand out with God: *Will ye provoke the* LORD *to wrath? Are ye ſtronger then he?*

2. This point muſt be a Prognoſtication of following deſtruction. Wouldeſt thou know thy ſtate and condition, at what diſtance or nearneſs thou art to deſtruction? Conſider well with thy ſelf, what warnings thou haſt neglected, what chaſtiſements thou haſt ſlighted, how many rods God hath ſpent upon thee. *O my Son* (ſaith *Solomon*) *deſpiſe not the chaſtiſements of the* LORD. If thou haſt, thy *deſtruction ſleeps not*. Thus the Prophet made a certain ſign to *Amaziah*
E of his deſtruction: *I know* (ſaith he) *God hath determined to deſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt not hearkened to my counſel*, 2 Chron. xv. 16. Thus *Moſes* ſeals up all his Admonitions, *If any man hear the threatnings of this Book, and ſhall reſolve to go on in his wickedneſs, the wrath of the* LORD *ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and he will deſtroy him from under heaven.*

We have ſeen the nature of the Judgment, 'tis *an Ax at the root*.

II. Let

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II. Let us consider and observe the nearness, nay presentness of the Judgment. 'Tis not barely threatned, *the Vision is not for many dayes to come.* No, the *Ax* is in God's hand, 'tis *now laid to the root of the tree. Now*: What is that *Now*? What is the importance of that circumstance? *Now*, when the Messias is exhibited, Christ is come amongst us: *Now*, that the Gospel is published, and those tidings of Grace are brought into the world; *Now the Ax is laid to the root of the tree*; *Now* judgment draws near. It may seem somewhat strange, that Christ should be the Messenger of Vengeance. He comes with words of comfort; the time of his appearing, 'tis called *the acceptable year, the day of Salvation*, the year of Jubile; and so the Gospel is the tidings of peace and pardon. 'Tis so by God's primary intention; but, by occasion of our entertainment, if that be amiss, the Gospel is the greatest procurer and hastner of Judgment. Divers Reasons of it.

1. The Gospel, 'tis the last date of the patience of God. He hath used forbearance to the world before; but, when he sends his Gospel to us, then 'tis high time we should answer his expectation. Thus the Owner of the Vineyard speaks, *Luke* xiii. 7. *These three years have I come and sought for fruit of this Fig-tree.* Now, if after all the culture which the Gospel uses, it still continues barren, then *cut it down.* We must not look, that God will alwayes connive at our unfruitfulness. *Acts* xvii. 30. *The former times of this ignorance, God winked at; but now he commands all men every where to repent.* The patience of God, though in the Attribute it be infinite, yet in the exercise he hath set limits and bounds, put a period to it. *I held my peace*, saith God, *but now I will cry as a woman in travel.*

2. The Gospel hastens Judgments; because it convinces the world more clearly of sin. And a sinner, after conviction, if still he persists, is *ripe for destruction.* Ignorance is a motive to God, to use patience towards us, *the times of ignorance, God winked at.* But now the Gospel brings a greater light into the world; he that sins against the Gospel, sins against actual clear light. *Had I not come, they had no sin,* (that is, *nothing so great*) *but now they have no cloak for their sins*, nothing to excuse them, *Joh.* xv. 22. Thus *Paul* convinces the Jews, *I demand, Have they not heard? Yes*, (saith he) *the sound of the Gospel is gone abroad.* Now Conviction, 'tis a great aggravation of sin, a great hastner of Judgment. This Reason St. *Augustine* gives, why, since Christ's time, and the publishing of the Gospel, the world hath suffered more heavy calamities, then it did before. The *Heathen* objected it to Christians, and St. *Augustine* grants it: But mark his Reason, *Mundus nunc, sicut malus servus sciens voluntatem Domini, gravius punitur.* "Now, saith he, the World is like that bad servant in the Gospel, "that knows his Masters will and doth it not, and therefore is beaten "with more stripes.

3. The Gospel, it hastens Judgments; because it occasions the encrease, and growth, and ripeness of sin more abundantly, and so makes it fit for Judgment. Indeed the least beginnings of sin deserve destruction;

A destruction; but yet God observes this Oeconomie and dispensation, that sin shall grow to a certain maturity and ripeness, and then comes destruction. *Gen.* xv. 16. There 'tis said, *The sins of the Amorites are not yet full.* So saith God to *Jeremy*, *What seest thou? A ripe Almond-tree*, saith the Prophet. What did that betoken? ripeness of sin: and what saith God? *I will hasten my word to perform it*, Jer. i. 11. Now the Gospel brings a ripeness to sin, not of its own nature; where it works kindly, it mortifieth sin, and kils the root of it; but the malice of man is more enraged by it. As St. *Paul* saith, *Sin abounded through the Commandement*: So the Gospel, where it converts not, aggravates sin, and
B so hastens destruction. As the approach of the Sun ripens not only good corn, but brings up noysom weeds; the more rain, and the hotter weather, the more the Tares grow. Thus the Doctrine and Miracles of Christ enraged the *Pharisees*, brought them to that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. There was none guilty of that sin, till Christ came. 'Tis a sin, that is bred only under the Gospel. Hear what the Prophet *Joel* speaks, *Chap.* iii. 13. *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get ye down, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great.* 'Tis *Christs* Prophecy of the last times; then wickedness shall abound, and the fulness of that is the season of vengeance.

C 4. The Gospel is an hastner of Judgments, because it hath *virtutem congregativam, & separatitiam*; it makes a collection of God's people, and so by consequence, makes a separation. It fits men by grace, and gathers the elect: and, the Church being once finished, that blessed number being accomplished, judgment hastens upon the world of unbelievers. While *Lot* staid in *Sodom*, the City continued: Hear what the Angel sayes to him, *Gen.* xix. 22. *Haste thee away, I cannot do any thing, till thou be at Zoar.* But then fell storms of fire and brimstone. Now the Gospel, that finishes the number of the Elect, and so hastens God's kingdom. Till that be gathered, God forbears
D the world, though it be devoted to destruction. As a woman, though condemned to die, yet, if she be with child, she shall be reprieved till the childe be born. But when the work of the Gospel is consummate, then God's Judgments will break in upon the World. As soon as *Noah* was in the Ark, then the Flood came. When you have inn'd your Corn, then you turn your Swine into the fields: So when the Gospel hath finished God's Harvest, then he lets his Judgments loose. What said *Moses? Get ye from the tents of these wicked men*; and then the Earth *swallows up the Rebels.*

5. The Gospel it hastens Judgments, because sins against the Go-
E spel are more unpardonable, of greater provocation.

(1) 'Tis a sin of higher contempt, offers greater indignity to God, then sins against the Law. It hath *digniorem nuntium.* The Law was delivered by *Moses*, the Gospel by *Christ.* Though they slight his servant, yet surely they will *reverence my Son*, saith the owner of the Vineyard in the Gospel of St. *Matthew.* And what saith *Paul? If they escaped not, who despised him that spake from Earth, of how much sorer punishment*

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are they worthy, that contemn him that ſpeaks from heaven? Here is a greater then *Moſes*, a greater then *Jonas*. A

(2.) Sin againſt the Goſpel, is a ſin of greater ingratitude. And ingratitude, that's a ſin of high provocation. The offers and tenders of more mercies, if deſpiſed, argue great unthankfulneſs, and ſo haſten heavie Judgments. The Goſpel, that offers the richeſt mercies; in it God offers us his Son, his Spirit, his Kingdom; if theſe be not accepted, it puts God's bounty to a *non-plus*, makes him cry out, *What could I have done more for my Vineyard?* Eſai. v. 4. We juſtly deſerve to ſuffer the worſt of all his Judgments, becauſe we deſpiſe the beſt of all his Mercies. The ſtrongeſt and the ſweeteſt Wine, makes the ſharpeſt Vinegar; the richeſt Mercies, if abuſed, turn into the greateſt anger, breeds the heavieſt indignation. B

(3.) Sin againſt the Goſpel, 'tis a deſperate ſin, and ſo haſtens Judgments. Such ſins ſet us beyond hope, render us unpardonable. Why ſo? becauſe ſuch an one *peccat contra remedia*, he ſins againſt the remedy and means of recovery: As he that ſhall have eaten poyſon, if he will uſe the means, he may be cured; but, if he takes the medicine, and ſpits it out, or flings it from him, there is but one way with him, he muſt certainly periſh. He that breaks the King's Laws, deſerves puniſhment, but he may eſcape it: but he that ſcorns the King's Pardon, and flings it from him, he is paſt hope. C

It muſt make us look about us, that are Chriſtians, and live under the Goſpel. As we have the faireſt opportunities, ſo we run the greateſt hazards. The ſins of *Chriſtians* are of a greater ſize, of a lowder cry, of a deeper die, of a *more heavy puniſhment*. The *Goſpel* is no *indifferent* thing; it will either *mend* us, or *end* us. 'Tis like *ſtrong Phyſick*, we ſhall be *much the better*, or *far the worſe* for it. It will ſet us either *paſt danger*, or *paſt recovery*. We are now upon the brink of danger; the *Goſpel* works either *thorough reformation*, or elſe it brings *utter deſtruction*.

We have ſeen the firſt Particular, the Judgment threatned, both in the nature of it, and in the nearneſs. Let us now, D

Secondly, Take notice of the condition annexed, the quality of the perſons, againſt whom it is threatned, the great ſin, that haſtens deſtruction; and that, the Text tells us, is *Unfruitfulneſs*. The want of fruit, and that good fruit too, pleaſant, profitable, abundant fruit, that's the Title of our Perdition, the merit of deſtruction. An unfruitful Chriſtian is devoted to Perdition; nothing can exempt thee.

Many Pleas we may imagine to our ſelves, to eſcape the puniſhment; but they will not ſerve us.

Firſt, Thou canſt not plead *dignitatem Agricolæ*. Oh! I am of God's own planting, he hath ſet me here with his own hand, ſurely he will favour the work of his hands. No, that ſhall no excuſe thee. He that planted thee, if thou proveſt unfruitful, ſhall pluck thee up again; He will deſtroy the work of his own hand. 'Twas the Plea of the Jews; *Oh! we are thy people. They made their boaſt of God.* No, if we anſwer not his expectation, he that planted us, will root us up again. E

They

A *They are a people without understanding, therefore he that made them, shall not have mercy upon them,* saith the Prophet *Esai.* See how he dealt with his first Plantation, when it proved unkindly, *It repented the LORD that he made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at heart,* Gen. vi. 6. and he adds, *I will destroy man whom I have created.*

Secondly, Secure not thy self *in privilegio soli.* Think not the privilege of the soil, wherein thou art set, that it shall excuse thee. O, thou art planted in a choice place, in the Garden of God! No, that shall not exempt thee. Thou art a Member of the visible Church! No, that shall be no protection. Nay, that will add to thy condemnation A
B man will endure an unfruitful Tree any where, rather then in his Garden or Orchard. In the Fields or Hedges, men suffer them to grow; but they cut them down, cast them out of their Gardens. God is not so much displeased with the unfruitfulness of *Heathen* and *Pagans*; they are trees of the Forest. Christ shews where they grow, *Luke* xiv. 23. *in the High-wayes* or *Hedges.* I, but a Christian grows in God's Garden, that must be fruitful. *Every branch, that bears not fruit in me, he takes away,* saith Christ, *John* xv. 2. *Macer taurus in pingui arvo:* Lean Kine in a fat Pasture is an ill sign.

Thirdly, Secure not thy self *in bonitate folii,* in the fairness of thy
C leaf of outward profession; this will not exempt thee from the stroke of the *Ax.* A formal Christian will content himself in some leaves, and shews, and out-sides of Religion. Ye see, they will plead it at the day of Judgment, *Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name? Thou hast taught in our Synagogues, we have eat and drunk in thy presence,* heard the word, received the Sacrament. But that's all, here all the sap runs out into leaves. To such he will say, *I know you not.* These Fig-leaves will not then shelter us. *Habent & folia circumvolitantia decorem quendam,* saith St. *Basil:* they are pleasant and delightful, but they are but conjectural signs of a good tree: *By their fruits ye*
D *shall know them.* He that searches for fruit, lifts up every leaf: so will God do when he comes to judge us. The Fig-tree that Christ cursed, had leaves good store; but Christ looked for fruits and found none; therefore he cursed it. The form of godliness, that's *in folio*; but the power of godliness, that's *in fructu.*

Fourthly, Secure not thy self *in spe germinis,* in some blossoms and imperfect attempts and beginnings of Piety. Many a tree sends forth hopeful blossoms: but they are soon nipt, never come to maturity. There hath been many an hopeful Spring blasted. Οὐ τελεσφορεῦσι, saith our Saviour of some forward Christians, *they bring nothing to perfection.*
E Good thoughts, holy motions, sudden passionate vows and promises to live holily, to give over a sinful course of life, they have the goodness of a blossom; but if they be not well set, they take not, but come to nothing. Thus the man in the Gospel blossomed fair, when in all the haste he said to Christ, *Master, I'le follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; but one discouraging word turned him off presently. Such also was the young rich man in the Gospel, *Master, What good thing*

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ſhall I do to inherit eternal life? Here was a ſpecious bloſſom; but when Chriſt called for fruit, *Give Alms to the Poor*, preſently the bloſſome was blaſted. *Herod* was fairly bloſſomed at *John*'s Preaching, he was much taken with his Sermons, *he heard him gladly*. So was *Agrippa* almoſt perſwaded to become a thorow Chriſtian; but he had a full period at *Almoſt*. Almoſt, that's a bloſſome; Altogether, that's good fruit. A

Fifthly, Secure not thy ſelf *in carentia mali fructûs*. Oh! I ſhall be ſpared, the *Ax* ſhall not paſs upon me, I bring forth no bad fruit, I am no Adulterer, no Extortioner, no Blaſphemer, I wrong no man. Miſtake not thy ſelf, that Plea will not free thee from the ſtroke of the *Ax*. Unfruitfulneſs in goodneſs is enough to condemn thee. A negative Chriſtian is no good Chriſtian. A Chriſtian is not to be defined by meer Negatives; 'tis no good deſcription of a Chriſtian to ſay, *A Chriſtian is one that doth violence to none, he is no Oppreſſour, no uſurper of another man's right*, (though 'twere well ſome that would needs be accounted the only good Chriſtians, were but ſuch kinde of Chriſtians) No, a Chriſtian muſt *bring forth good fruit*, he muſt be *filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks; *Abounding in every good work*, Col. i. 10. *Full of mercy and good fruits*, James iii. 17. The idle ſervant did not miſpend his Lord's Talent; but he did not improve it: he did not diminiſh it, but he did not encreaſe it: that was enough to caſt and condemn him. B C

God will endure any man, rather then a Chriſtian, to be unfruitful. A tree growing in the field or foreſt, 'tis for ſhade, or firing, or other materials, we expect no fruit from it: but a tree in the Garden muſt bring forth fruit, or 'tis utterly unprofitable. Here what God ſaith, *Ezek.* xv. 2. *What is the Vine-tree better then the trees of the Foreſt*, if it be unfruitful? Nay, 'tis worſe, *ſhall Wood be taken of it to do any work withal? Will men take a pin of it to hang any thing upon it? Behold*, ſaith God, *'tis caſt into the fire for fewel, the fire devours both the ends and the midſt of it*. D

Wouldeſt thou then bring forth good fruit?

I. Look thou beeſt implanted into Chriſt, the root, and ſtock, and original of all true faithfulneſs. John xv. 4. *Abide in me*, ſaith Chriſt, *and I in you: as the branch cannot bear fruit of it ſelf, except it abide in the Vine; no more can ye, except it abide in me*. Thou muſt be effectually incorporated into him, not in faſhion only, and outward profeſſion. St. *Auguſtine* obſerves there are two ſtocks or trees, from whence man-kind muſt ſpring; the one is the firſt *Adam*, the other is Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*. Firſt, every man grows out of the firſt *Adam*, is a branch of that barren tree: but a Chriſtian muſt be engraffed into the ſecond *Adam*, united and incorporated into Chriſt, to make him fruitful. The *Pelagean* could ſay, That the beſt of the *Heathen*, they were but *ſteriliter boni*; all their ſeeming goodneſs was no better then barrenneſs, being out of Chriſt. Wouldeſt thou be fruitful? E

II. Be

A II. Be ſure to draw nouriſhment and ſtrength from the ſoil. God's Church is a fat and a fruitful ſoil; there is a rich moiſture of Grace that's abundant in it. *All my freſh Springs are in thee.*

III. Suffer gladly the culture of *Paul*, the waterings of *Apollos*, make uſe of their Miniſtery; that's able to make us fruitful. *Aaron*'s rod, laid in the Tabernacle, ſhall bring forth ripe Almonds. *If my word abide in you*, ſaith Chriſt, *ye ſhall bring forth much fruit.*

IV. *Pate influentiæ cœli.* Lie open and be ready to receive the influence of heaven. That's one way to make trees fruitful, open the roots, that the Sun may relieve them. The inſpirations of Grace, the B breathings of God's Spirit, theſe breed ſap and vivacity in us. A tree, all the plantings, and dreſſings, and waterings are to no purpoſe, except the Sun doth quicken and enliven it. 'Tis a rule in Husbandry, *Non tellus ſed annus fructificat*: 'tis not the ſoil, but the ſeaſon of the year, that makes things fruitful. The dew of Heaven, the diſtillations of Grace, thoſe benign influences of God's holy Spirit, from them comes all our ſpiritual fruitfulneſs. *Non omnia germinant, quæ plantantur, & rigantur; ſed quibus Deus dat incrementum*, Aug. *De gratia Chriſti, Cap.* xi.

And then in the laſt place, the fruit we bring forth, it muſt be *good* C *fruit*: *Every tree that brings not forth good fruit*, ſuch as the Lord of the ſoil will take content in. It muſt not be *Eſai*'s *wilde grapes*, Eſai. v. 2. nor *Jeremie*'s *naughty Figs*, Chap. xxix. 17. not *the Apples of* Sodom, not *the ſower grapes of* Gomorrah; *their grapes were grapes of Gall, their cluſters were bitter*, Deut. xxxii. 32. but kindly, pleaſant, and acceptable fruit.

And that thy fruit may be ſuch good fruit,

1. It muſt ſpring and grow from a good tree. Make the tree good and his fruit good. Firſt, the tree muſt be good. Ye know what Chriſt ſaith, *Men do not gather Grapes of Thorns, nor Figs of Thiſtles. How* D *can they that are bad, bring forth that which is good?* "What is the "Tree? ſaith *Auguſtine*, that's the perſon; thy perſon muſt be ſancti- "fied, e're thy fruit will be accepted. What is the root of that Tree? "that, ſaith *Auguſtine*, is thy heart and will. An holy heart, a recti- "fied will, a religious bent and frame of the ſoul, that's the root of "all good fruit. *Out of the good treaſure of the heart comes all good works. Oh! Keep thine heart with all diligence, from thence proceed the iſſues of life.* Good fruit,

2. It muſt be proper fruit, fruit according to it's kind; that's the fruit, which God expects of thee. *Be fruitful in the works of* E *thy calling*, do good in the place that God hath ſet thee in. Look well to thine own duty, intrude not thy ſelf into another man's work. Reformation of abuſes, 'tis good fruit; but be ſure of thy Warrant, or 'tis not good fruit, as it comes from thee. Preaching of the Goſpel, 'tis in it ſelf a bleſſed fruit; but is it a fruit of thy Calling? elſe thou art a profane uſurper. Here the rule St. *Peter* gives, 1 *Pet.* iv. 10. *As every man hath received the gift* (the gift of Ability, and the

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the gift of Authority) *ſo let him miniſter the ſame one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold graces of God.* Good fruit, A

3. It muſt be ſeaſonable fruit. That's *David*'s deſcription of a good Man, *Pſal.* i. 3. *He brings forth his fruit in his ſeaſon.* Take the opportunities of doing good. *Occaſio*, 'tis *Dei nutus*; when God gives the ſeaſonable occaſion of a good work, that's God's beckoning to thee; then he expects a good deed from thee. 'Tis *St. Paul*'s Rule, *While we have time, let us do good to all.* The time of life, the time of health, the time of peace; before the evill day come upon thee. *Up and be doing, and the Lord ſhall be with you.* Our fruit,

4. It muſt be good in the meaſure and proportion. B

1. It muſt be good in the proportion of the ſoil, and in the culture and pains that God hath taken with thee. God hath not planted thee in a barren Wilderneſs, but *in monte filii Olei*, as *Eſai* ſpeaks, in his Church, a fat and fruitful hill. Oh, when the ground doth not yield the ſeed again! So much coſt laid on, his favours, his bleſſings, his inſtructions, his pruning-knife of fatherly corrections: anſwerable to theſe means of Grace muſt be thy fruitfulneſs, or it will not be accepted.

2. It muſt be good fruit in proportion to our age and continuance in the Church of God. Men look not for plenty of fruits from tender Plants; but grown Chriſtians muſt be fruitful Chriſtians. Hear what *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* xcii. 13, 14. *Thoſe, that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God, they ſhall bring forth fruit in old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* C

3. It muſt be good fruit in proportion to our former barrenneſs. *Shee that was barren*, ſaith *Hannah*, *hath brought forth ſeven.* A true penitent muſt be more abundant in fruits of Piety, *bring forth fruits meet for Repentance.* Every ſcantling of Piety is not meet for Repentance. 'Tis *Gregorie*'s Obſervation, "There may be fruits *digni innocentiâ*, which are not *digni pœnitentiâ*. God expects more from a penitent ſinner, then from him that never fell fouly into any groſs impiety. Repentance ſends us to God, as *Jacob* did his ſons the ſecond time into *Egypt*, *Carry double money in your hands.* A penitent ſinner muſt pray more devoutly, walk more humbly, live more induſtriouſly and circumſpectly, then ſome other Chriſtians. Such fruits as theſe are *meet for Repentance.* D

E

A SERMON ON PSALM lxxiii. 28.

But it is good for me to draw near to God.

THE Text 'tis the Prophet's Victory and Triumph over a great temptation, that had much perplex'd him. The temptation was sharp, and of dangerous consequence; An inclination that arose in his mind, to give over his practice of Religion and Devotion, as a thing meerly in vain, not at all regarded, or accepted by God. The Psalmist sets it down in the thirteenth Verse, confesses what desperate thoughts began to rise in his heart; *Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency.* He could see no profit, or good success in it.

I call it a Temptation; and it appears to be so by the working of it. There are three motions in the spirit of the Psalmist, which shews it to be no more then the brunt of a Temptation, rather then the natural brood of his own corruption, which he settled upon.

First, He startles at it, and 'tis grievous and vexatious to him, he takes no pleasure or delight in it, he rouls it not under his tongue, and sucks sweetness out of it; but 'tis as gall and bitterness to him, his heart was grieved at it, and *he was pricked in his reins*, Vers. 21. That's one good tryal to discern a temptation from an inbred corruption; if our hearts be troubled at it, startle at it, and take no pleasure in it.

Secondly, As he startles at it, so he struggles with it, and checks it, and strives and reasons against it; *If I say, I will speak thus* (as this temptation suggests) *behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children*, Vers. 15. He argues, and disputes with his own heart, he yields not presently, and embraces the motion; but opposes an holy meditation against this wicked and prophane temptation. That's a second sign, 'twas but a temptation, he closes not with it, but wrestles against it.

Thirdly,

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Thirdly, He ſeeks to God for help againſt it. *He went into the Sanctuary of God*, Verſ. 17. ſought for help and direction in this perplexity from the Word of God. He conſults not with fleſh and blood, and carnal reaſon, but lays hold on the *Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*, oppoſes the *ſhield of faith* to quench this temptation, and fiery dart of the Devil. The Pſalmiſt doth, as *Rebecca* did, when ſhe felt ſtrugglings in her womb; *If I be ſo, why am I thus? and ſhe went to enquire of the LORD about it*, Gen. xxv. 22. That's one ſign, that 'tis no wilful uncleanneſs, but force and raviſhment, if a Woman cries out, when her chaſtity is aſſaulted, *Deut.* xxii. 27. When in theſe conflicts and temptations we ſeek to God to aſſiſt us, to ſettle our doubts, to eſtabliſh our conſcience, to ſhew us the right way, 'tis a good argument, that Temptations are our vexations, rather then our ſins.

A little to inſiſt upon this temptation, that we may the better underſtand the Prophets Victory.

The Motive that brought him into this temptation; the ſcandal that ſtumbled him; the ſcruple that perplexed him; the σκόλοψ, and thorn that galled and vexed his ſoul, was the conſideration of the proſperous eſtate of wicked men, ſuch as never buſied themſelves with the thoughts of God, meer ſtrangers to his fear, that gave no regard to walk holily before him: yet he ſaw, that all things went well with them, they lived in eaſe and plenty, they met with no croſſes or calamities. *Surely*, (thinks the Pſalmiſt) *I am miſtaken, there is a nearer way to happineſs, then this long and laborious, and tedious way of Religion, I'le even make trial of their courſes.*

And this temptation, it hath aſſaulted many Saints of God. Holy *Job*, he ſuffered this conflict, the proſperity of the wicked ſtumbled him, *Chap.* xxi. 6, 7, 8, 9. *When he remembred, he was afraid, and trembling took hold upon him; Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, and are mighty in power? their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.* The Prophet *Jeremie*, he laboured alſo under this temptation, *Chap.* xii. 1. It makes him to reaſon, and expoſtulate with God; *LORD*, ſaith he, *Let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper? Wherefore are they happy that deal very treacherouſly?* And this bitter weed, it grew rank in *Malachie*'s time, and had tainted the greateſt part of the People of God; the Prophet charges them with it, *Chap.* iii. 14. *Ye have ſaid, 'Tis in vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it, that we have kept his Ordinances, and have walked mournfully before him? for now we call the proud happy, and they that work wickedneſs are ſet up, yea, they that tempt God are now delivered.* Now ſurely, a fearful temptation it is, thus to feel grudgings of Atheiſm, and Profanenſs, and to repine at God's dealings with us. And yet we ſee God's own Children, if left to themſelves, may fall into it.

Firſt, That bitter root of Envy, not fully mortified in the Saints, diſpoſes them to it. *David* felt it, and was fain to chide it in himſelf,

Pſal.

Sermon I.

A *Pſal.* xxxvii. 1. *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity.* To a meer natural man, in whom Envy reigns, another mans happineſs is his torment. But even regenerate men have ſome weft of it ſometimes. The whole day's Labourers envied, that the Labourers but one hour in the Vine-yard ſhould fare as well as they, *Mat.* xx. The dutiful Son thought much, that the Prodigal Son ſhould be received and feaſted, *Luk.* xv. St. *James* points it out, *Chap.* iv. 5. *The ſpirit that is in us, luſteth to Envie.*

Secondly, Some remainders of worldly deſires are ſtill abiding in them, they are not yet fully crucified to the world, nor the world to
B them; they are not only *filii*, but *filii ſæculi*, Aug. There is ſome ſap of the old ſtock ſtill continuing in them; they think ſometimes God might be more open-handed towards them. As *Joſeph* did with his Father *Jacob*, they miſlike the croſſing of his hands, and placing the fuller and more bountiful hand upon the Worldling's head.

Thirdly, This Temptation oft-times ariſeth out of a miſconceit, that men frame to themſelves of God's Providence, in the diſpenſation of theſe outward Bleſſings. They think them *bona Throni*, whereas they are *bona Scabelli*; take the Foot-ſtool for the Throne of God. They judge them infallible ſigns of God's favour, bleſſings that
C are entailed and aſſured to his Children, the portion of his beloved ones, and ſo are offended to ſee Poverty and Piety; Proſperity and Prophaneſs to go together. Eſpecially the *Jews* under the Old Teſtament, were more ſubject to this temptation. They were leſs, but we are more to be blamed, if we give way to it. The Promiſes of God, as made to the *Jews*, ran in the terms of temporal proſperity; *long life*, and *victory*, and *riches*, were the open expreſſions, by which God engaged himſelf to them. This made the *Phariſees* to *laugh* at Chriſt, when he ſpake againſt the ſeeking after worldly wealth, *Luke* xvi. 14. and the Diſciples to wonder when Chriſt ſaid, *How hardly ſhall a*
D *rich man enter into Heaven?* Hence it is, that Chriſtians ſometimes judge of their ſpiritual eſtate by their outward condition; as *Gideon* anſwered the Angel; *If the* LORD *be with us, how is all this evil upon us?*

The Pſalmiſt hath been much troubled with theſe thoughts. He was even at a loſs; His *feet had well nigh ſlipt*: and all the Pſalm long, he hath been wraſtling with this temptation; and now at laſt he hath got the victory over it, and ſhaked it off, and ſets up this as his reſt, not to liſten any more to theſe ſuggeſtions: but, however God deals with him in outward things, yet he is fully reſolved to pre-
E ſerve his integrity, to hold on in a conſtant courſe of Piety. Here is the upſhot, and iſſue of all his thoughts, *'Tis good for me to draw near to God.*

So then, the words ſet out the happy iſſue, that the Pſalmiſt hath found out of his temptation; the Victory which he hath got over that evil ſuggeſtion; the reſolution that he hath fixed to himſelf, to keep cloſe to God in the practice of Piety: and 'tis a full victory;

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he hath perfectly discovered his former errror, and now sees clearly the contrary truth. A

And to a spiritual eye 'tis a spectacle worth the beholding; To see the Saints combating and wrestling with temptations, and triumphing over them; to see them buffeted with these Messengers of Satan, and yet prevailing against them. They may be perplexed, but they shall not be vanquished. They have their wrestlings, and sharp encounters, like *Jacob* with the Angel; but at length they prevail, the success is comfortable. *When I said, My foot slippeth, thy mercies, O* LORD, *held me up*, Psal. xciv. 18. *I am sometimes afraid*, saith *David*, *but yet I put my trust in thee*, Psal. lvi. 3. What expostulations doth *David* make with God, *Psal.* lxxvii. 8, 9. *Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath his anger shut up his tender mercies? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore?* A sharp encounter, a strong pang of distrust and infidelity: but he overcomes it, *Vers.* 10. *I said, It was mine own infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.* Thus sometimes his Children, they take down poyson; but God gives them strong and sovereign Antidotes. The Viper may fasten upon St. *Paul*, but he shakes it off again. God's Children may have temptations, and murmurings of distrust, and discontens; but they recover out of them. A clear Spring of Water may be troubled, and soiled with mud; but it will purge out the soil, and work it self clear again. B C

For the Words themselves, they are an holy Conclusion, that the Psalmist makes quite opposite and contrary to his temptation. The temptation was to draw him from God, that he should give over his piety and integrity, and seek for happiness in other courses. But his conclusion gives a plain contradiction to the temptation. "What? shall "I forsake my God, and my Religion? No, no, (saith the Psalmist) "far be that from me; *'Tis good for me to draw near to God.*

In them take notice of three Particulars.

First, We will consider the Conclusion it self in general. D

Secondly, The strength of it.

Thirdly, The matter, and purpose of it.

First, The Conclusion it self, that I call the *holy Extract*, that the Psalmist hath drawn out of this Temptation.

Secondly, Here is the strength of the Conclusion in these words; *But 'tis good for me.* And this strength will appear in three particulars.

First, Here is the strength of a firm Resolution; *'Tis good.*

Secondly, Here is the strength of a full Opposition; *'But it is good.*

Thirdly, Here is the strength of a close and personal Application; *But 'tis good for me.* And then, E

Thirdly, The matter and purpose of the Conclusion is; *To draw near to God.*

Come to the

First Particular, the Extract, or Conclusion it self. The Psalmist hath here fixed upon a Conclusion, which he hath gathered and gained by his Conflict with the Temptation. He hath been sore troubled, and

A and vexed with it; but he hath found this good by it, that now he ſees 'tis his only courſe to keep cloſe to God.

Obſerve; *God's Children are not only delivered out of their temptations, they have not only an* ἔκβασις, *as St.* Paul *calls it*, a way to eſcape; *but they are much bettered, and enriched by them; they gain ground by theſe ſtumbles; are improved by theſe aſſaults; they are more eſtabliſhed in Piety by theſe temptations; they find out ſome precious truths; they gain ſome rare experiments of grace, and comfort, that without temptation they had not met withal, or not ſo fully and feelingly as now they do.* Bare contemplation is nothing ſo
B effectual to acquaint us with God, and the power of his Grace, and the comforts of his Spirit, as trials by temptations. The Philoſopher ſaith truly, *Expertus certius operatur, quàm Artifex.* Experimental Chriſtians, that have felt the combats of temptations, and found the aſſiſtances of grace, know more fully what theſe things mean, then only thoſe that are notional and Book-Chriſtians. Much good comes by them.

Firſt, Temptations make us know our ſelves, our inclinations, our weakneſſes, our corruptions, and all that is *in our hearts.* A Chriſtian oft-times ſtands in the dark to himſelf; *Queſt. ipſe factus ſum mihi*,
C ſaith *Auguſtin.* He knew not himſelf, nor the ſecret bent of his own heart, but temptations will diſcloſe us to our ſelves. This courſe God took with *Hezekiah*, he let him fall into a temptation: 'tis ſaid, *God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.* 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. There was a ſecret pride and vanity that lay lurking in his heart, that was diſcovered by that temptation. *Peter* thought that all that was in him, was good corn, till Satan winnowed him, then he found a great deal of Chaff and Tares, which that temptation diſcovered.

Secondly, Temptation gives us a ſweet experience of God, and his
D Grace in us, and of the truth of his Word and Promiſes to us. Faith indeed gives aſſurance of all theſe; but Temptation gives experience, and experience will not be born down. That will reſiſt all gain-ſayings; *I know I have felt it; in the midſt of all the ſorrows, that were in my heart, thy comforts have refreſhed my ſoul. This poor ſoul cryed, and he anſwered me*, Pſal. xxxiv. 6. *Come, I'le tell you what God hath done for my ſoul*, Pſal. lxvi. 16. *Paul* glories more of his buffetings by Satan, and his deliverances by God, then of all his miracles; 2 Cor. xii. Such a Chriſtian can ſay, with *David*, *Thy word is tryed to the utmoſt, and thy ſervant loveth it.*

E *The Word of the* LORD *is tryed in the fire*, ſaith *David.* We know that many extractions are made by fire; it will diſſolve and diſcover many things, that otherwiſe could not be found out; 'tis ſo in the fire of temptation. Temptation, 'tis God's furnace; though the Devil heats it, and blows the coals: Many Truths are found out in thoſe exigences. As *Luther* ſaid well; *Study, Prayer, and Temptation will make a Divine.* As if he ſhould ſay, *Study, and Practice,*

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and Sickneſs will make a Phyſician. We are beholding to the winnowings of temptations for many precious Truths. As in matters of Doctrine, thoſe Truths that have been moſt oppoſed, are beſt clear'd, and judiciouſly ſettled. Hereſie, 'tis *Lima veritatis*; Errors and Hereſies, they are as files to Truth, and do make it ſhine more clearly: So, in matters of practice, the furnace of temptations hath ſent forth many rare Experiments. The Saints come out of it, as the *Iſraelites* did from *Pharaoh*'s furnace, enriched with Jewels. As ſickneſſes breed skill in remedies: ſo temptations will teach us preſervatives, reſtoratives againſt our ſpiritual maladies. "*Egypt*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*, had not "only burdens and vexations; but Jewels of gold and ſilver, with "which the *Hebrews* came out enriched: ſo temptations have not "only ſpiritual conflicts and perplexities; but they afford us preci-"ous experiments of the workings of grace, as the ſpoils of our vi-"ctory.

We have ſeen the firſt thing, the Iſſue and Concluſion. But then, Secondly, I obſerve this concluſion, 'tis ſtrengthned,

Firſt, With a firm reſolution; *'Tis good.* The Pſalmiſt doth not barely ſay on the ſudden, *I'le draw near to God*; but lays down his reſolution, fixes his purpoſe, makes it the final determination of his judgment, reſolves with himſelf; *'Tis good* ſo to do.

And we will take notice of this holy reſolution of the Pſalmiſt.

I. Reſpectively to his former temptation.

II. We will conſider it abſolutely in it ſelf.

I. Compare it with his temptation, what was that? 'twas to depart from God, to give over his Religion. That was his temptation. What was his reſolution? 'Tis to *draw near to God.*

It muſt teach us to diſtinguiſh, and put a difference betwixt the temptations of a Chriſtian, and his reſolutions, and accordingly to judg of a Chriſtian, not by his temptations, but by his reſolutions. Judg the Pſalmiſt by the eſtimate of his temptation, and you will think him an Atheiſt, but conſider his reſolution, and you will find him a Saint. A Chriſtian may be overtaken with ſome ſudden inclinations and temptations to ſin; but he never comes to this height of ſinning, as to ſay, and reſolve with himſelf, *'Tis good* to do ſo. He doth not purpoſely, and reſolutely allow himſelf in the commiſſion of any known ſin; bleſſes not himſelf in any wicked way. It was that which comforted *David* in all his infirmities, that he *regarded not wickedneſs in his heart*, Pſal. lxvi. 18. He comforts himſelf in his freedom from that degree of ſinning. So in *Pſal.* xviii. There he avows his integrity upon this ground, that his reſolutions were right; *I have not wickedly departed from my God*, Verſ. 21. *I did not put away his ſtatutes from me*, Verſ. 22. *I kept my ſelf from mine own iniquity*, Verſ. 23. However he was ſurprized with temptations, yet the purpoſe and bent of his heart went not with them; his reſolutions were holy.

1. For thoſe which are properly Satan's temptations (ſuch as Divines call Diabolical) if we accept them not, nor embrace them, they are

A are his ſins, they are but our vexations. As the Lawyers ſay, If one ſhall plant a tree in another man's ground, if it takes not root, 'tis his, that ſet it there; but, if it takes root, then *cedit ſolo*, then it belongs to the owner of the ſoil: So, if Satan tempt us, and we yield not to him, the temptation, 'tis his ſin, not ours; but, if we let it take root in our hearts, then it becomes our ſin, and we muſt own it, and anſwer for it; but otherwiſe not, it is not charged upon us.

2. In our own corrupt inclinations, when we are *tempted, and drawn away, and enticed by our luſts*, as St. *James* ſpeaks, if we approve them not, ſay not, *'Tis good* to yield to them; but reſolve and ſtrive a-
B gainſt them: though they be ſins, yet they are infirmities, they alter and overthrow not the ſtate of a Chriſtian; but are conſiſtent with grace and ſalvation, and God will graciouſly eſteem of us, not according to our temptations, but according to our good purpoſes, our faithful endeavours, and holy reſolutions.

Yet this is a great difference 'twixt a Saint and a profane ſinner. A wicked man may have ſome ſudden attempts and ſuggeſtions to good; but his reſolutions are naught: he judges it good for him to continue his ill courſes. On the contrary, a good Chriſtian may ſuffer ſome ſud-
C den pangs of temptation as *David* had, *I ſaid in my haſte, All men are lyars, Samuel*, and all the Prophets: but he checks himſelf preſently, and recovers, and holds himſelf to his good reſolutions.

In that ſin of *numbring the people*, 2 Sam. xxiv. if you will look upon *David*, and *Joab* in their ſudden motions, you will think *Joab* the Saint, and *David* the great ſinner. How was *David* tranſported with pride and vain glory? He ſends out his Commiſſion of Array, he will muſter up his forces, only to know them: And then, on the other ſide, how religiouſly doth *Joab* ſpeak, and diſſwade him from that ſin? Here is the difference, *David* was ſurpriz'd with a temptation, and *Joab* by chance affected with a good motion. *Joab* was ſuddenly good, but
D habitually bad; *David*, on the contrary, ſuddenly bad, but habitually and reſolvedly good. As we judg of the depth of a River, not when there is a great fall of rain that ſwells it up; but when it runs only into its own current, by the ſtream that ariſeth from the Spring-head: ſo we are to eſtimate a Chriſtian, not by the diſtempers of a temptation, what he ſeems then, but by his own ſober, and habitual, and conſtant reſolutions.

II. Conſider this reſolution of the Pſalmiſt, abſolutely in it ſelf; he reſolves, *'Tis good to draw near to God*. He lays it down as a Princi-
E ple and Maxime, works it into his underſtanding, convinces his judgment, fixes it deeply in his heart; I reſolve 'tis good.

Obſerve, "He that means to be a through-Chriſtian, and to ſerve "God to ſome purpoſe, muſt lay down grounds and reſolutions for it, "and ſet the bent, and byas, and purpoſe of his heart ſtrongly upon it. Thus the Saints in Scripture have reſolved themſelves for the ſervice of God; *David*'s *Dixi cuſtodiam*, Pſal. xxxix. 1. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed*; Pſal. lvii. 7. *David* avows himſelf his ſervant,

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vant, *Pſal.* cxvi. 16. *Behold*, LORD, *I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant.* He calls himſelf one that is devoted to his fear. And again, *Pſal.* cxix. *I have ſworn, and am ſtedfaſtly purpoſed to keep thy commandments.* 'Twas that which *Barnabas* commended to the Converts in *Antioch*, Acts xi. 23. *He exhorted them all, that with purpoſe of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.* A

Sudden flaſhes, and *extempore* motions to good, many finde in themſelves, as *Balaam*, and *Agrippa*; they will in all haſte become religious; but they want this root of Piety, a firm reſolution; they have not wrought their hearts to this concluſion, *'Tis good for me to be religious.* B

The poſſeſſing of our ſouls and judgments with theſe reſolutions in point of Chriſtianity, 'tis of great uſe and avail to us in the courſe of Piety.

1. This thought wrought to a reſolution, when we give it the authority of a Principle, it will have a powerful command upon the whole ſoul to ſet it on working. Let thy judgment, out of through deliberation, ſay to thee, *'Tis good for me to be religious*, thy will, and thy affections will forth-with yield and embrace it. As we ſee in other reſolutions; thou reſolveſt to be rich, how doth it ſet the whole man on work? 'twill employ thy thoughts, thy care, all thy endeavours; all the powers of ſoul and body will yield obedience to this commanding reſolution. C

2. Theſe holy purpoſes and reſolutions make our ſervices far more acceptable and pleaſing unto God. Who regards ſuch ſervants, that are good only by fits and ſtarts? to day they will ſerve us, to morrow they will be gone. But when we become ſuch ſervants to God, as the Law ſpeaks of, ſuch an one, as ſaith, *I love my Maſter, I'le not go from him*, Exod. xxi. 5. that deſires to have his ear bored, that he may ſerve him for ever; ſuch a ſervant Gods ſets much by. See how God enquires after ſuch a ſervant, *Jer.* xxx. 21. *Who is this that engageth his heart to approach unto me?* God accounts ſuch a ſervant worth the entertaining. D

3. Theſe purpoſes and reſolutions to be religious, when they are in their ſtrength, will admit of no contradiction. There is no reaſoning or diſputing againſt Principles and Maxims. There is no queſtioning of *prima principia*, or *ultimus finis*. Sudden imperfect notions may be laid aſide, and given over by contrary perſwaſions; but, when our hearts, are fixed upon theſe holy purpoſes, they will fling off, and reſiſt all contrary ſolicitations.

(1.) Theſe Reſolutions they will ſettle and eſtabliſh the fickleneſs and ſlipperineſs of our hearts, and breed conſtancy in us. Without them our hearts are exceeding various and changeable, will ſoon ſtart aſide, tire, and give over. But theſe Reſolutions they do *immobiliture cor*, they make us immoveable, firm, and conſtant in the practice of Piety. Theſe holy and firm Reſolutions againſt ſinful temptations, St. *Peter* calls ſpiritual armour, 1 *Pet.* iv. 1. *Arm your ſelves with this mind to ceaſe from ſin.* E

(2.) Where

A (2.) Where these Resolutions bear sway, they discourage, and dishearten Satan's Temptations; he hath small hope to seduce and mislead a resolved Christian. Indeed, loose and unengaged men, that can say, like them in the Gospel, *No man hath hired us*, they are every man's money, ready to be entertained and employed by any new Master; *Sed alienum servum nè* Nero *manu-misit*. He, that hath already hired himself out, bound himself to serve his Master, there is no enticing of him, he hath engaged himself already to another service. A resolved Christian hath taken Earnest, and Press-money of God, bound himself to his service. The Devil hath small hopes to prevail with such a Chri-
B stian. Such an one saith, as St. *Paul* tells us, *We are not our own*, we are hired, yea *bought with a price*, we must not be the servants of sin and Satan.

That's the first strength of the Conclusion, a full resolution; *'Tis good for us.*

Secondly, Here is another strength of the Conclusion, it is made with a full opposition; *But it is good. But*, it is an adversative Particle, it turns our backs upon all other courses, rejecting and opposing it self against all other wayes and courses in the World. See this opposition in *David*, *I held straight to thy Commandments, and all false wayes I utterly abhor.*
C Psal. cxix. 28. The Psalmist considers the several wayes of the sons of men, ponders their paths, and all things considered, he opposes this holy purpose to all their pursuits; *Let them run a madding after other things, but 'tis good for me to draw near to God.*

Observe, *A right-bred Christian, though all the world should forsake God, yet he will keep close to him.* The Psalmist considers the men of this world with all their advantages.

I. He considers their number, they are many; all the people fall to them, *Vers.* 10.

II. He considers their prosperity they *prosper in the world, they en-*
D *creas in riches*, all succeeds well with them, *they have more then heart can wish*, Vers. 7. And,

III. He considers their power and strength to do hurt, and mischief, they are full of violence and oppression; *They speak wickedly concerning oppression*, Vers. 8. 'Tis ill crossing them, or dissenting from them. Well, the Psalmist yields them all these advantages; Let them have the multitude, I will choose Piety with paucity; Let them have abundance, give me Piety with poverty; Let them oppress, and offer violence, I will embrace Piety, even with persecution. He, that can make this choice, refuse wickedness with all her advantages, and em-
E brace Piety with all her disadvantages and discouragements, he hath a strong evidence that he is a good Christian.

This choice and embracing of Religion with this opposition to the worldling's advantageous condition, it argues and demonstrates three excellencies in thy Piety.

1. It argues the truth and sincerity of thy Piety, that thou cleavest to God for himself, and not upon by-respects, or sinister aims, or worldly

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worldly enducements. When Proſperirity and Piety go both together, 'tis hardly known to which of them thou addicteſt thy ſelf. As when two friends walk together, 'tis not ſo well diſcerned to whom they belong that follow after them, and wait upon them; but when the Maſters part, then we know to whom the Servant belongs, to him whom he follows, when the other leaves him: ſo, when Piety and Proſperity part, and go ſeveral wayes, then, if thou cleaveſt to Piety, and letteſt go Proſperity, 'tis a good ſign, thou art a faithful ſervant to God and Religion. A

2. This choice of Religion, even with oppoſition to the multitude of the world, argues the ſtrength of thy Religion, that it is well-grounded, and upon a ſure foundation, that we build our houſe upon the Rock, and not ſet up a Shed, or a lean-to to another man's houſe. It ſhews, that we are not carried with a multitude; but are able to go alone in a good way. It argues, that we ſee with our own eyes ſome excellency in Religion, that we do find that in God, that countervails; nay, exceeds all, that is in the world. They that take up Religion upon truſt and conformity to others, they make Religion but a faſhion, not a matter of devotion; they are like children that cannot go alone, but muſt be led, or carried by the help of others. B

3. This reſolution to be religious even with oppoſition to all the advantages of the world, it will argue conſtancy and perſeverance in the courſe of Piety. Doſt thou conſider with thy ſelf, if I be religious, I am like to go alone, (the men of the world, they are of another gang) to differ from the world, and to depart from them; and more then ſo, I may be brought to want and poverty by my Religion; the wealth of the world runs another way: nay, which is worſt, I am like to undergo violence and oppreſſion, to ſuffer perſecution for my Religion, and yet all theſe fore-laid and conſidered, yet thou reſolveſt to be religious. Thou haſt counted the coſt as Chriſt bids thee, *Luke* xiv. 28. forecaſt the worſt; ſure, when theſe evils come upon thee, thou wilt not ſay, thou art miſtaken: 'Tis no other then I looked for, the Croſs is no ſcandal to me; I took upon me the practice of Religion, and the ſervice of God upon theſe terms; I'le not give it over, though theſe things befal me, *Nudum Chriſtum nudus ſequar*. *Judas*, he followed Chriſt upon hopes of worldly gain and preferment, dreamed of an earthly Kingdom; when he ſaw his hopes went backwards, perſecution began to ariſe, and all the people took againſt Chriſt, he ſaw he was miſtaken, and gave over preſently. But *Paul* had otherwiſe learned Chriſt. When the Prophet *Agabus* foretold him of perſecution, he was not ſtartled at it, 'twas no more then he looked for; he knew right well, that *bonds and afflictions did abide him*; and ſo gave not over, but held out conſtanily. C D E

That's the ſecond ſtrength of the Concluſion, a full oppoſition. There is yet,

Thirdly, A third ſtrength of this holy Concluſion, that's a particular cloſe Application to himſelf, *'Tis good for me*. The temptation that

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A that troubled him, was in part general, a condemning of the generation of God's children, as if they had been a forlorn people; and he over-maſters this temptation in Verſ. 1. *Yet God is good to Iſrael*; but he reſts not there, but brings it home to himſelf, *It is good for me.* This temptation caſt the Pſalmiſt into a ſpiritual ſwoon; and here are two degrees of his reviving: as it was with the *Shunamite*'s dead childe, that was raiſed by *Eliſha.*

I. He breaks forth into this general reſolution; *Yet God is good to Iſrael*: that's *ſternutatio fidei*, the neeſing of the dead childe, when life began in him; but then,

B II. He proceeds to his own perſonal reſolutions; *'Tis good for me*: here is *apertio oculorum fidei*, his eye-ſight clearly reſtored to him, he is perfectly recovered.

There is a great difference 'twixt theſe two reſolutions, *Yet God is good to Iſrael*, and this, *'Tis good for me to draw near to God*; *Bonum eſt Iſraeli, & bonum eſt mihi.* Many a man will yield to the firſt, confeſs *God is good to Iſrael*, that cannot work his heart to ſay, *'Tis good for me to be a true Iſraelite, and to draw near to God.* We may be ſound Catholicks, and yet bad Chriſtians. We can eaſily approve Piety in the general, ſay; *'Tis good to be religious, not to oppreſs, or defraud, or*
C *ſlander, or malign*; but when we come to *judicum practicum, & ultimum dictamen*, to our own caſe, *hîc*, and *nunc*; to ſay, and reſolve, "*Tis good* for me to abſtain from this ſin, when preſent temptation aſ
"ſaults me; when Satan brings up the gain to my hand, Do this un-
"juſt action, and thou ſhalt gain by it; purſue this unlawful courſe,
"thou ſhall proſper in it; allow thy ſelf the commiſſion of this ſin,
"thou mayeſt do well enough for all it; then to recollect thy reſolu-
"tions, to bid defiance to a preſent temptation with this holy reſolu-
"tion. *'Tis good* for me to abſtain from this evil, then thou art come
"to a good pitch of Piety.

D Saint *Paul* notes this difference, *Rom.* ii. tells us, a man may approve the things that are excellent, and yet never embrace them himſelf, or practiſe them; ſay, that a man ſhould not do thus, or thus, and yet do ſo himſelf; commend thoſe that are religious, and yet not imitate them. As *Act.* v. 13. the people highly eſteemed the Chriſtians, but yet would not become Chriſtians themſelves; the people magnified them, but yet would not joyn themſelves to them. Nay, *Naaman* the *Syrian*'s converſion was better; he doth not only make a general profeſſion; *I know there is no God in all the earth, but in Iſrael*; but comes to perſonal reſolution, *From henceforth I will*
E *offer neither burnt-offerings, nor ſacrifice unto other Gods, but unto the LORD*, 2 King. v. 17. addicts himſelf to his ſervice and worſhip. I, that's a good Chriſtian's reſolution, which the Pſalmiſt makes, Pſal. xlviii. 14. *This God is our God for ever and ever, he ſhall be our guide unto death.*

The laſt things remains,

Thirdly, The matter and purpoſe of the Concluſion; 'tis to

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draw near to God. 'Tis a full and important Speech, as large and comprehenſive, as that of *Solomon*, Eccleſ. xii. 13. *Let's hear the ſum of all*; and again, 'tis *totum hominis*, 'tis *the whole duty of man.* A

And this drawing near to God, it gives check to three ſorts of men.

Firſt, It reproves *Demas* his backſliding, and forſaking Religion. Such were thoſe Diſciples *St. John* ſpeaks of, that took a tetch at Chriſt's doctrine; 'tis ſaid, *They went back, and walked no more with him*, Joh. vi. 66.

Secondly, It checks the *Laodicean* luke-warm, or thoſe ſtunted Chriſtians. If they be a little entred into Religion, 'tis enough, no need of progreſs, or proceeding. B

Thirdly, It will mend St. *Peter*'s pace, and ſuch as he is. Though he moved towards Chriſt, yet 'tis ſaid, he followed Chriſt afar off, kept his diſtance, there may be danger in coming too near him.

We will reſolve this approaching, and drawing near to God into three gradations.

I. There is *proximitas profeſſionis*, a nearneſs of profeſſion; when we take upon us the holy profeſſion of being his ſervants. Profaneneſs ſets us far from God; but the profeſſion of Religion brings us near him. Thus the people of *Iſrael* are called a people *near unto him*, Pſal. cxlviii. 14. And amongſt the *Iſraelites*, the Tribe of *Levi*, that had a more immediate attendance upon him, are ſaid to be near him, *Numb.* xvi. 9. *Seems it a ſmall thing unto you, that the God of Iſrael hath ſeparated you from the Congregation of Iſrael, to bring you near to himſelf?* Thus Chriſtianity brings us near to God. *You that were ſometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt*, Epheſ. ii. 13. So then, that's the firſt degree of the Pſalmiſt's reſolution, not to caſt off the ſervice of his God; but to adhere to it, to conſecrate himſelf to that holy profeſſion. *Eſai* deſcribes it, *Chap.* xlv. 5. *One ſhall ſay, I am the LORD's, another ſhall call himſelf by the Name of Jacob, and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hands unto the LORD*, Ἐπιχαράξει τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ, Τῷ Θεῷ εἰμι· ſo the *Septuagint*; *He ſhall write it upon his hand, I am the LORD's*; as Soldiers were wont to have the name of their General painted, and pounced into the fleſh of their hand: Or as St. *John* expreſſes it, *Rev.* xxii. 4. *His Name ſhall be in their fore-heads. Moſes* ſets it out very emphatically, calls this *an avouching of God to be our God*, Deut. xxvi. 17. Or as the Prophet *Micah* terms it, a walking in the Name of God, *Mic.* iv. 5. *All people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the Name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.* That's the firſt, a nearneſs of profeſſion. C D E

II. There is another degree of approach, that's *proximitas cultûs*, nearneſs of adoration; an approaching to him in the ſolemn duties and addreſſes of worſhip and invocation. A good Chriſtian is always near God in all his converſation; but Prayer and worſhip brings us nearer to him. Chriſtians are alwayes in his houſe and family; but the

A the duties of religious worſhip bring us into the chamber of preſence: we then approach to his Throne, we fall down before his foot-ſtool. Chriſtians, like *Martha*, ſerve Chriſt in all their employments; but in his immediate worſhip, like *Mary*, we ſit at his feet. As *Hester* was near the King, while ſhe lived in his royal Palace; but, when ſhe came into the inner Court, and bowed herſelf, and touch'd the top of his Scepter, and made her Petition to him, then in a ſpecial manner, ſhe drew nigh to him. *God is nigh unto them that call upon him faithfully*, Pſal. cxlv. 18.

III. There is yet a cloſer approach, that's the nearneſs of fervent
B and ardent devotion. This nearneſs betokens in our holy performances much intention and ſtrength of devotion. Religion brings us into his preſence; but earneſt devotion brings us cloſe unto him, when we perform all out ſervices *actu intenſivo*, with ardency of affection. St. *Paul* joyns both theſe together, *Fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the* LORD, Rom. xii. 11. Ordinary Piety affords us *ſcalas ad aſcendendum*, we climbe up by that Ladder; but fervency of devotion affords us *alas ad volandum*, it gives our Prayers the wings of an Eagle, nay the ſix wings of a Seraphim. Feeble Prayers are but *ſaltus Cicadæ*; but fervent Prayers are *volatus Aquilæ*: thoſe like the motion of the Graſs-hopper, theſe as
C the mountings and ſoarings of the Eagle. While common Chriſtians ſtay and worſhip at the foot of the Mountain; Devotion, like *Moſes*, enters into the thick cloud, to God's more immediate preſence. The Scripture calls this, *To take delight in approaching to God*, Eſai. lviii. 2. not to content himſelf to wait upon God at a diſtance, but to be immediately about him; not only to be his menial ſervants, alwayes in his houſe, but to be *interioris admiſſionis ſervi*, to have acceſs to his perſon and preſence. Indeed, a Chriſtian, till he be in heaven, never thinks himſelf near enough to God, he is ſtill moving towards him; panting out his longings with *David*, *Oh! when ſhall I appear before*
D *the preſence of God?* Pſal. xlii. 2. Here, neither Chriſt doth ſufficiently enjoy a Chriſtian, nor a Chriſtian him. Still he calls for nearer admiſſion; *Open unto me, my love, my dove*, ſaith Chriſt, *Cant.* v. 2. And ſtill the Spouſe begs nearer acceſs to him; *Draw me unto thee, and I will run after thee*, Cant. i. 4. She is never ſatisfied, till ſhe enjoys his embracings for ever in Heaven. Here, in the Sacrament we are fed *furfure Sacramenti*, as *Bernard*: but in Heaven we ſhall be fed *adipe frumenti*, with the fatneſs of his houſe. The Sacrament, that's but *viaticum*, our refreſhing in our journey; in Heaven, that's *convivium*. The Sacrament is *cœnaculum ſponſi*, the Gueſt-chamber: but Heaven
E is *thalamus ſponſi*, where the Soul embraces him, whom ſhe loves and longs for.

A SERMON ON St. Luke xviii. 7, 8.

And ſhall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you, that he will avenge them ſpeedily.

THere is no one Duty in Chriſtianity, the practice of which our Saviour preſſes upon us more frequently then the duty of Prayer. In the Goſpel, he often ſtirs us up to it, and to many holy qualifications of it:

Firſt, To *Humility* in Prayer, in the Parable or ſtory of the *Phariſee* and the *Publican*.

Secondly, To *Confidence* in Prayer, in the ſimilitude of a Child craving food from his Father.

Thirdly, To *Charity* in Prayer: *When you pray, forgive:* Matth. xi. 25.

Fourthly, To an *holy Earneſtneſs*, and *unwearied Importunity* in Prayer in this Chapter, μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, that we ſhould not languiſh and grow weary of Prayer.

The Text then, 'tis an exhortation to Prayer, to importunity in Prayer, to importunity in Prayer upon a ſpecial caſe, and that's the caſe of ſuffering wrong and oppreſſion. And the Text encourageth to this importunity, ſhewing the prevalency of earneſt and importunate Prayer, by a gracious promiſe that is aſſured to it.

And this aſſurance is made to us not only by a bare promiſe, though that be much (Faith, when it meets with a promiſe from God, will ſoon grow confident) but this aſſurance is confirmed by ſtrength of Reaſon, and proof of Argument. And the Argument is drawn *à comparatis*, from a compariſon taken from an unjuſt Judge of a City, one that regarded not the ſufferings of an oppreſſed poor Widow, but yet being wearied with her clamours and importunity, did at laſt do her right,

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right, and avenge her of her enemy. And then our Saviour argues *à minori ad majus*; from that which is more unlikely and improbable, to that which is upon many reasons more hopeful and certain. Shall importunity of clamour prevail for justice with a profane and unrighteous Judge? and shall not the fervent prayers of God's Church and children mightily prevail for their deliverance with our righteous God? Surely, not only Faith and Piety, but natural reason and common sense will yield to this argument, and be convinced by it. A

So then the Text, 'tis the inference and conclusion which our Saviour gathers from the former comparison, and 'tis thus: *An unrighteous and graceless Judge was overcome by prayers: Therefore our righteous and gracious God will much more yield to them, and be intreated by them.* And in it take notice of three Particulars, by which this Conclusion is laid down. B

First, Here is a gracious Assertion; *Shall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him?*

Secondly, Here is a seasonable prevention of an intervening Objection; that's in these words, *Though he bear long with them.*

Thirdly, Here is a strong confirmation and improvement of the Conclusion: *I tell you, he will avenge them speedily.*

And this Conclusion, 'tis not laid down positively by way of Affirmation: it runs not thus, *God will avenge his own Elect:* but by way of Question and Interrogation, and that's of greater evidence, of stronger assurance; *Shall not God avenge them?* Is it possible, or likely, that he shall reject their prayers, and not avenge them? He puts it to their own impartial judgments, whether they can imagine he should neglect them. And yet, because sentence is not presently executed, but God forbears for a time, infidelity therefore may deny the truth of it. *Incredibile videtur, sed incredulis.* It may seem incredible to those that are incredulous. And then, because these delayes of God's justice may often perplex and stagger the Faith of God's children (*I said in mine haste*, saith *David*, *all men are Lyars*, all these promises of deliverances are but delusions) therefore Christ will not trust them with the Answer to this Question, but makes it himself: As *Paul* did with *Agrippa*, *Doest thou believe? I know thou believest*: So Christ here anticipates the doubtfulness of our Faith, and gives a firm and full Answer to this Question himself; *Shall not God avenge? Yes, I tell you, he will avenge them speedily.* C D

Come we to the

First Particular, The Assertion, *Shall not God avenge his own Elect, that cry day and night unto him?* And herein we have, E

First, The Person of the Judge; *God.*

Secondly, The Act of Justice; *Avenge.*

Thirdly, The Parties wronged, whom God will right and relieve; *His own Elect.*

Fourthly, The Exigence, upon which he will do it; *That cry unto him day and night.*

First,

A *First*, Here is the perſon of the Judge, and that's God. *And ſhall not God avenge?* And the Inference is ſtrong upon three advantages in the compariſon.

I. The Judge in the compariſon was an unjuſt Judge, *verſ.6.* Did the unjuſt Judge relieve the oppreſſed? how much more ſhall God, the juſt and righteous Judge, avenge his people? Men, the beſt of men may fail in point of Juſtice; but God is unqueſtionably a righteous Judge. Juſtice and Righteouſneſs are near and dear unto him. He dwells with Juſtice: *Juſtice and Judgment are the habitations of his Throne*, Pſal.lxxxix. 14. He is cloathed with Juſtice; *He puts on the*
B *Garments of Vengeance for cloathing, and is clad with zeal as with a cloak*, Eſai.lix.17. More then ſo, he is armed with Juſtice; *He hath put on Righteouſneſs as a Breſt-plate, and an Helmet of ſalvation upon his head*, verſ.17. Nay, he is Juſtice it ſelf. Juſtice in God is no good quality, that may be got and loſt again, but it is his very Nature and Eſſence. Deny him to be *Juſt*, and ye deny him to be *God*. That which is juſt by participation onely, is nothing to that which is juſt by nature. As Light in the Air, 'tis but derived from another Light: but Light in the Sun is in the Fountain of Light. The Air may be darkened and loſe his Light, but the Sun cannot. Men are righteous
C but by Derivation onely, but God is the *Sun of righteouſneſs*, and the Fountain of it. That's the firſt advantage; If an unjuſt Judge did relieve the oppreſſed, much more will a juſt God do it.

II. The Judge in the Context was an inferiour ſubordinate Judge; but a City Magiſtrate, *verſ.2.* of no greater Juriſdiction; much like the Centurion in the Goſpel, though a Commander, yet he himſelf was under Authority. Had he denied Juſtice to this poor Widow, there had lain an Appeal from him to a ſuperiour Judge, the caſe had not been ſo deſperate and forlorn. But God is the ſupreme Judge, to whom all Appeals are made. He is the Judge of Judges. That's a ſe-
D cond advantage of greater aſſurance. Juſtice more concerns the ſupreme Judge then inferiour Officers and Miniſters of Juſtice. Theſe do not their own work, but the work of him that imploys them. As *Jehoſhaphat* tells the Judges of the Land, 2 *Chron.* xix.6. *Ye judge not for men, but for the Lord.* 'Tis his buſineſs, to him belongs righteouſneſs. Injuſtice in inferiour Judges, 'tis an iniquity. But what ſaith *Solomon? 'Tis an abomination to Kings to do wickedly, for the Throne is eſtabliſhed by righteouſneſs.* Surely oppreſſion is an abomination to God, he will avenge it. 'Twas *Abraham*'s Plea with God, *Shall not the Judge of all the World do righteouſly?* And Saint *Paul* makes it a
E matter of Horrour and Blaſphemy, that God ſhould be thought not to do Juſtice. *Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? God forbid; for then how ſhall God judge the world?* Rom.iii 5. No, he layes down this for an undoubted Concluſion, *We are ſure the Judgment of God is according unto truth*, Rom.ii.2.

Here is the comfort of God's children, though the petty Judges and Juſtices of the world ſlight and neglect them; nay, more then ſo,

wrong

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wrong and oppreſs them, yet they have a Supreme and Sovereign Judge, to whom they may appeal, and he will certainly right them. 'Twas *David*'s caſe, it ſeems all the people roſe againſt him and wronged him: Well, mark to whom he commits his cauſe, *Pſalm* xliii.1. *Judge me, O God, and plead my cauſe againſt an ungodly nation.* When it comes to that caſe, which *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Eccleſ.* iv. 1. *I conſidered all the oppreſſions that were done under the Sun; and behold the tears of ſuch as were oppreſſed, and they had no comfort; and on the ſide of their oppreſſours there was power, but they had no comforter.* Well, let them not be diſmaid, God is a Comforter and an Avenger. Though God hath committed the execution of Juſtice to his ſubordinate Delegates; yet there are certain Prerogative Caſes reſerved to himſelf. I will name three of them: A B

1. *Quando vindex non vindicat*, when they whom God hath authoriſed to be Miniſters of Juſtice, are careleſs, and neglect to do it. Such Gallio's there be that can ſee and ſuffer the oppreſſion of others, and care not for it. As *Julian* and the Heathen Judges would ſcoff at the poor Chriſtians complaints, and tell them in deriſion, *They muſt turn the other cheek, and ſuffer patiently.* *Solomon* tells us there lies an Appeal to God in this Caſe, *Eccleſ.* v.8. *If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment in a Province,* that there is no relief in a whole Province to be obtained, *marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher then the higheſt, regardeth, and there be higher then they.* That's a Prerogative Caſe; They that are not tried at the Petty Seſſions, ſhall not eſcape the trial of the Grand Aſſiſes. Another Caſe is, C

2. *Quando vindex opprimit*, when they that ſhould avenge them, are they that wrong them. That's the Caſe that *Eſay* ſpeaks of, *Chap.* v. 7. *I looked for judgment, and behold, oppreſſion; for righteouſneſs, and behold, a cry! Their Princes are roaring Lions, their Judges are evening Wolves*, Zeph.iii.3. But here is the redreſs, *verſ.* 5. *the juſt LORD is in the midſt thereof, he will do no iniquity, he will bring his judgment to light, he faileth not.* Supreme Powers are not to be affronted by their Inferiours, *Tuti ſunt Imperio ſuo.* Well, here is our comfort, they that have no earthly power over them, yet are obnoxious to Gods Tribunal, yet they muſt hold up their hands at God's Bar. *Solomon* puts this caſe likewiſe, *Eccleſ.* iii. 16. *I ſaw under the Sun the place of judgment, that wickedneſs was there, and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there.* (That's a ſad Caſe, when they that ſhould be Avengers, are themſelves Oppreſſours.) Well, what ſaith *Solomon?* what remedy hath he found out? *I ſaid in my heart, God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked.* He ſhall call the beſt, and biggeſt of them to an account; He can break the great teeth of theſe Lions, he can make them melt away as Snails; the fierceſt Lions are in his hands like the ſlimie Snail, *Pſal.* lviii. 8. There is yet a third Prerogative Caſe; D E

3. *Quando ipſi vindices opprimuntur*, when they that are appointed

A pointed to be God's avengers, are themſelves oppreſſed and made to be ſufferers. There hath been ſuch wickedneſs under the Sun. *David* complains not onely of the ſons of *Zerviah*, that they were too bold, and over-bearing; but he met with ſons of *Belial*, *Abſaloms*, and *Achitophels*, and *Shebas*, and *Shimeis*, enemies that were too ſtrong for him, that *prevented him in the day of his calamity*. Read the eighteenth, and the hundred and eighteenth *Pſalms*, and you ſhall find this caſe fully exemplified. He was ſo handled by them, as if he had not been anointed with oyl. Well, this is a Prerogative caſe: God will take this into his own hand, and will avenge them. 'Twas *Hezekiah*'s prayer,
B though upon another occaſion, *O Lord, I am oppreſſed, undertake for me*, Eſai. xxxviii. 14. How ſeverely did *David* avenge the villany offered to his Agents and Embaſſadours? and ſhall not God avenge his Deputies and Subſtitutes when they are wronged? That's the ſecond advantage; If an inferiour Judge did reſcue, how much more ſhall the Supreme Judge avenge and right them?

III. The Judge in this Chapter was an hard-hearted, mercileſs, incompaſſionate Judge, he had no pity on a poor diſtreſſed Widow. He avenged her, not *juſtitiâ ductus, ſed tædio victus*, Aug. in *Pſal.* lxxviii. But God is a gracious, compaſſionate Judge. He hath bowels of pity.
C He is the helper of the helpleſs. That's a third advantage of Aſſurance, that our complaints ſhall prevail with him. *'Tis a joy to the juſt to do judgment*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xxi. 15. Much more doth God delight in righting the cauſe of his afflicted ſervants. Thus *David* deſcribes him, *Pſal.* lxxii. 14. *He ſhall redeem their ſouls from deceit and violence, and precious ſhall their blood be in his ſight.* If *Saul*, when he came to be a Judge and a Ruler, could ſay, *What ails the people that they weep?* 1 *Sam.* xi. 5. he was affected with the tears of his diſtreſſed Subjects; how much more doth God compaſſionate the ſorrows and ſufferings of his people? *He will not hold his peace at their tears*, as *David* prayes,
D *Pſal.* xxxix. 12. This comforted *David* when he was perſecuted, *Pſal.* lii. 1. *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf, O thou mighty man, that thou canſt do miſchief? the goodneſs of God endures yet dayly.* His goodneſs ſhall reſcue him from their wickedneſs. He forewarns the *Iſraelites* from cruelty and oppreſſion upon this ground: *When the oppreſſed cries unto me, I will hear; for I am gracious*, Exod. xx. 27. *Tantum de Judice.*

Secondly, Come we to the Act of Juſtice, 'tis called an *Avenging*; and that's an act of reſcue and relief; that's the Mercy that is here promiſed. Take it in a three-fold notion:

E I. 'Tis not an act of Prevention, but of Subvention. He doth not ſay, "Shall not the Lord preſerve his people from the oppreſſions "of violent men, keep them out of trouble, reſtrain the malice of "their enemies, that they ſhall not annoy them? No, we have no ſuch promiſe of exemption from troubles and afflictions. *Et nemo ſibi promittat, quod Evangelium non promittit.* We muſt look for troubles and hard meaſure from the world, 'tis our portion, and we

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must ſubmit to it. Chriſt tells us ſo, *Joh.* xvi. 33. *In the world ye ſhall have tribulations*; yea much tribulation. *We muſt through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Acts xiv. 22. The followers of a crucified Saviour muſt bear the Croſs. But here is our comfort; though God will not keep us from trouble, yet he will be with us in trouble, and in his good time, he will bring us out of trouble. His thoughts towards us will be *thoughts of peace, to give us an unexpected end*, Jer. xxix. 11. That's the firſt notion of this Act, 'tis an act of relief out of trouble, not of prevention. A

II. He will avenge them, 'tis a word of reſcue and deliverance, 'tis not a promiſe of victory and triumph over thoſe that perſecute them. He doth not ſay, *They ſhall over-maſter them that have oppreſſed them, and keep them under*: but here is our hope for this life, and 'tis well with us that 'tis ſo much, *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous*, Pſal. cxxv. 3. but God will remove it. 'Twas the matter of *David*'s thankfulneſs, *Pſal.* xxx. 1. *Thou haſt not made my foes to rejoyce over me.* And ſo again, *Pſalm* xli. 11. *By this I know thou favoureſt me, that mine enemies do not triumph over me.* That's favour and mercy that our enemies have not their will upon us; that God breaks off their yoke from our necks, that he limits and reſtrains their malice, and puts an end to it. 'Twas that comfort which God gives to *Baruch*, Jer. xlv. 5. *Seekeſt thou great things for thy ſelf? ſeek them not, but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey.* So *Jeremie* acknowledgeth, *'Tis the tender mercy of the* LORD *that we are not conſumed*; but have a tolerable ſubſiſtence. 'Tis a fair favour for ſtrangers and travellers (and ſuch as are God's people in this world) that they may have redreſſes of wrongs, and injuries; they muſt not look for dominion and command over them that wrong them. The Churches triumph over her enemies is reſerved to another day, *Then we ſhall ſet our feet on the necks of our oppreſſours; then the righteous ſhall have domination over them in the morning.* But in this life, reſcue and deliverance is a Chriſtian's portion. Let others dream of a Kingdom in this world, and of the Saints bearing rule over their enemies, 'tis enough if he gives us here reſt from the day of adverſity, *Pſal.* xciv. He promiſes us ſafety, not triumph and victory, *Pſal.* xii. 5. *For the oppreſſion of the poor, and for the ſighing of the needy, now will I ariſe, ſaith the* LORD, *I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffs at him.* That's the ſecond Notion; Safety, but not Victory. B C D

III. This act of Avenging, 'tis an act of *Recompenſe*, and of diſtributive Juſtice. And it looks two wayes; firſt upon the Parties that do the wrong, and alſo upon the Parties that ſuffer wrong. In both it implies an act of Compenſation: To him that doth wrong, *rependet malum pro malo*, Coloſ. iii. 25. *He that hath done hurt, he ſhall ſuffer hurt:* and to him that ſuffers wrong, *rependet bonum pro malo*, he returns him good for the evil he hath undergone. Here is both ἄνεσις and θλῖψις, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, relaxation to one, and tribulation E

A bulation to the other. The Apoſtle joyns them both together, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 6. *'Tis a righteous thing with God to recompenſe tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, reſt with us.* Here *Paul* expreſſes both theſe acts; both *vindiciæ*, the relieving of his ſervants; and *vindictæ*, the repaying of their enemies. *He that hath done wrong, ſhall receive for the wrong that he hath done*, Col. iii. 25.

Moſes aſcribes both theſe to God, *Deut.* xxxii. 43. *He will avenge the blood of his ſervants, and render vengeance unto his adverſaries, and will be merciful to his land, and to his people.* *Jeremie* calls him the *God of recompenſes*, that will ſurely requite, *Chap.* li. 56. God's juſtice,

B 'tis like the fire of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Furnace; it burnt the bonds with which the three Worthies were bound, and it conſumed the bodies of them that caſt them in. *He will plead the cauſe of his people, he will take out the cup of trembling out of their hands, and put it into the hand of them that afflicted them*, Eſai li. 22, 23. That ſpeech of the ſame Prophet deſerves our attention and meditation, *Chap.* lxvi. 5. *Your Brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my Names ſake, ſaid, The* LORD *be glorified; but he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.* Your Brethren, not aliens and ſtrangers; a ſad thing for ſuch to be our oppreſſours! *My mothers children were angry with me,*

C Cant. i. 6. They are *filii matris*, but not *filii patris mei*, ſaith *Bernard*. The Church may own them, but God will diſclaim them. *They have caſt you out, uſque ad exterminationem*, left no place for them. *They ſay, Let God be glorified.* See how religious theſe oppreſſours were! Well, let them hear their doom: *God will appear to your joy, but they ſhall be aſhamed.* Here is the iſſue of God's avenging; *The righteous ſhall be delivered out of trouble, and the wicked ſhall come in his ſtead*, Prov. xi. 8. *Tantum de actu*, avenge.

Thirdly, There remain two things to be conſidered.

I. The Parties whom God will ſuccour and relieve; they are his

D own Elect. And then

II. The Exigence, upon which he will do it, *That crie unto him day and night.* And theſe two imply two Motives, by which God is graciouſly enclined to avenge and relieve them.

I. The firſt is that which Logicians calls *cauſa* αὐτοκινήτη, that's a motive from within him; that's his Free Grace of Election.

II. The ſecond Motive is that which they call *cauſa* μεταπτική, an inducement from without him, and that is their Earneſt and Importunate prayer; their *crying unto him day and night.*

I. They are his Elect and choſen Ones; and here is a fourth ad-

E vantage and improvement of the Argument. The Party wronged in the compariſon was a poor Widow, a ſtranger, unknown, and unregarded of the unrighteous Judge; but thoſe whom God will avenge are near and dear unto him, precious in his eyes, his choſen people, his own elect ones; *he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye.*

And they are expreſſed here with a very ſignificant Emphaſis. He calls them *his own Elect.* And, 'tis an expreſſion,

Sermon I.

1. In oppoſition to what the world accounts of them. God's People they are *mundo rejectanei*, the world eſteems them vile and deſpicable men, the off-ſcouring of all things. Well, here is their comfort, they are rejected of men, but choſen of God: the world makes them Veſſels of miſery, but God hath appointed them to be Veſſels of mercy: to the world they are Veſſels of diſhonour, but to God they are Veſſels of honour. The Church, 'tis *vidua mundo*, a poor helpleſs widow in the worlds eſteem; but 'tis *Sponſa Chriſti*, the Spouſe of Chriſt, dearly beloved of him; *diſallowed of men, but choſen of God, and precious*; as St. *Peter* ſpeaks. And then he calls them *his own Elect*, 'tis a Speech A

2. Of much affection; 'tis a word of endearment and great tenderneſs. Elect, that's the deſignation of his love; His own Elect, that's the embracing of his love. The more the world rejects them, the more doth God own them. The Church is never ſo dear to God, as when 'tis moſt maligned and perſecuted by men; *I have choſen thee in the furnace of affliction*, Eſai. xlviii. 10. B

So then here is both the original Motive that ſtirs up his avenge, 'tis his Election; and then here are the Perſons whom he will avenge, they are his Elect ones. *He is jealous for Sion with a great jealouſie; He is jealous for her with great fury*, Zech. viii. 2. His love it ſtirs up his jealouſie, his jealouſie that ſtirs up his fury againſt their enemies. As they ſay in Philoſophy, that *The* concupiſcible *faculty of our ſoul, ſets the* iraſcible *on work*: ſo God's love to his Children quickens and incenſes his wrath againſt their enemies. *Nemo lædat quos ego ſuſcipio, nemo ſpoliet quos ego defendo.* Let them hurt them that dare, ſeeing he hath choſen them. C

And then it points out the perſons, and ſhews whoſe wrongs and oppreſſions God doth eſpecially lay to heart. They are the ſufferings of his own Elect ones, his Church, and Children. Not but that God will avenge injuſtice done even to wicked men. He is ſo juſt a Judge, that the unjuſt ſufferings of ungodly men ſhall be by him avenged. There is a conceit in the world, that if a man be wicked, (and 'tis eaſie for ſome to account others wicked) ſuch they think may be wronged and oppreſſed; yea, 'tis thought a point of piety and zeal to ſpoil and oppreſs them. Nay, verily, God beholds ſuch oppreſſions and wrongs, and will call their Oppreſſours to a reckoning for it. This practice (when time was) coſt the people of God full dear. *Saul* would needs deſtroy the *Gibeonites* that were *Canaanites*, in zeal to the Children of *Iſrael*, 2 Sam. xxi. 'Twas a ſpecious pretence. What? ſhall *Gibeonites* be fellow-heirs with *Iſraelites?* Well, that fact of *Saul* brought a Famine in *David*'s time of three years continuance. It made *David* himſelf to ſupplicate to the *Gibeonites*, that they might *bleſs the inheritance of the* LORD, and intercede with God to remove that plague from them. A ſad caſe it was, that *Cham*'s *poſterity* muſt come to bleſs the *poſterity* of *Sem*; that *Canaanites* muſt be ſought to remove a Judgment from off the *Iſraelites*: yet this advantage they got of the people of God by being oppreſſed by them. D E

So

A So then he will avenge all kind of oppreſſion, but the ſuffering of his Saints ſhall be ſure to be requited. *Providentiam cæteris non negamus, ſed curam Sponſa vindicat*; Bern. *Their Redeemer is mighty, and he will plead their cauſe*, Prov. xxiii. 10. Thus *Eſay* comforts the people of God, *Chap.* xliii. 4. *Thou wert precious in my ſight, and I have loved thee; therefore I will give men for thee, and people for thy life.* God, as he is the Governour of the World, in his General Providence, forbids wrong and violence to any man; but as he is the Governour of his Church, he holds over them a ſpecial protection. God is a *King of Nations*, *Jer.* x. 7. and ſo is careful to maintain juſtice amongſt them: but he is in a more eſpecial manner a *King of Saints*, Rev. xv. 3. and watches over his Church, if any ſhall annoy them. As a King will avenge wrong done to any of his Subjects; but wrongs done to his own children, or his choice Favourites, or to any within the Verge, ſhall be ſure to be re-paid, and heavily puniſhed. *Tantum de tertio*; the Parties wronged, *his own Elect.*

B

Come we,

Fourthly, To the *Exigent*, upon which he will do it: and in it the *Motive*, from without; and that is,

II. *Their crying unto him day and night.* And here is a fifth advantage and improvement of the ſimilitude. The prayers of the poor widow were tedious and irkſom to the unjuſt Judge. *Extorſit tædio quod non potuit merito*, Aug. in *Pſal.* ciii. But the prayers of God's people, the more importunate, the more pleaſing and delightful they are to God. *He is a God that hears prayer.* The prayers of his Church are his chief delight. *Let me ſee thy countenance* (ſaith Chriſt to his Spouſe) *let me hear thy voice; for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely*, Cant. ii. 14. *Amat janua Salvatoris, ut pulſatoribus abundet opportunis, importunis*, ſaith *Auguſtine.* God loves to ſee his doors thronged with Suiters. *Send her away*, ſay the Diſciples to Chriſt, *for ſhe cries after us.* No, let her alone, Chriſt will have her cry lowder and lowder. The lowder the Muſick, the ſweeter to his ears. *Domine quæ tuorum preces exaudis, ſi has non exaudis?* ſuch prayers and importunities ſhall be ſure to ſpeed.

C

D

So then the *Exigent*, upon which God will avenge his Elect, is their earneſt prayer to him. And here are two things conſiderable:

I. Here is the neceſſity of this duty.

II. The importunity of it; And that both in the intention and vehemencie, it muſt be a crying to him; and alſo in the conſtancie and continuance of it, *Day and night.*

E I. Here is the neceſſity of this duty: they muſt pray unto him. But what needs this Condition and *Proviſo?* The men to be avenged and ſuccoured, are God's own Elect; is not that ſufficient to procure their deliverance? May we not thus reaſon and conclude, *If we be elected, then, without any more ado, we ſhall be delivered?* No, verily; though there be a certain, yet there is not an immediate connexion betwixt Election and Salvation: but many Actions, and Duties, and ſub-

Sermon I.

ſubordinate means muſt come betwixt, and joyn them together. Our Election, 'tis no *Superſedeas* to our Devotion; it doth not quench, but kindle our prayers. Neither God's purpoſes in our Election, nor his promiſes in our Vocation, are ſo abſolute, but that they exact our Duties of Piety and earneſt Invocation. The ſeal of our Election is the Spirit of Adoption, and that will make us cry *Abba, Father*. What ſaith *David*? Pſal. xxxiv. 15. *The eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous*. He ſees our afflictions, *He knows our ſouls in adverſity*: but yet for all that he adds, *His ears are open unto their prayers*. Though he ſees our condition, yet he expects, and exacts our prayer and ſupplication. *Ezek.* xxxvi. There God promiſes to ſave his people from the Heathen round about them, he aſſures them of it; *I the* LORD *have ſpoken it, and I will do it*; but then he adds that Clauſe and Proviſo; *I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael, to do it for them*.

A

B

II. Take notice of the Importunity of Prayer.

1. In the intention and vehemencie, 'tis *a crying unto God*.

2. In the conſtancy and continuance, *Day and night*. And here is a ſixth advantage and improvement of the ſimilitude. The oppreſſed Widow haunted the unjuſt Judge with her Petitions; the Church here comes not ſhort of her; nay, goes beyond her in her ſtrong prayers, and in her long prayers: *She cries, and ſhe cries day and night*. The Church of God is here compared to a Widow; and here ſhe fulfills Saint *Paul*'s deſcription of a good Widow, 1 *Tim.* v. 5. *She that is a Widow indeed, and deſolate, truſteth in God, and continues in prayers and ſupplications night and day*.

C

(1.) There muſt be a cry. Earneſtneſs and vehemency, are the great helps of Prayer; they are *adjumenta & ornamenta orationis*, they do both fortifie and beautifie our Prayers. Remiſs and cold wiſhes vaniſh in the air; but ſtrong cries and ſupplications they pierce the Heavens, and offer an holy violence unto God. *Et hæc vis Deo grata eſt*, ſaith *Tertullian*. God delights in ſuch importunity.

D

It muſt be a cry, and yet not every kind of cry will do it.

1. There is a *clamor cauſæ*, the cry of the cauſe, when that cries in God's ears; as *Abel*'s blood cried to God for vengeance.

2. There is *clamor plangentis*, the cry of them that bewail their ſufferings. *Hoſea* ſpeaks of ſuch clamours, *Chap.* vii 14. *They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds*. Such cries are but the howlings of Nature, not the cries of Devotion. That which the Text calls for, is *clamor orationis*, the ſtrong cries of our prayers and ſupplications. *Deſiderium*, 'tis *vox orationis*; but *vehemens deſiderium*, 'tis *clamor orationis*. Our prayers ſpeak to God, but our earneſt prayers they cry to God. And theſe cries are alwayes ſeaſonable, but of all in days of danger and affliction. Then what ſaith *Hezekiah* to *Eſay*? *This day is a day of trouble, lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left. Make thy voice to be heard on high*. What ſaith the King of *Niniveh*? *Let every*

E

man

Sermon I.

A *man cry mightily unto God, Keep not ſilence, give the* LORD *no reſt*, Eſai. lxii. 1. Chriſt being in an agonie, prayed more earneſtly, *Luke* xxii. 44. Such prayer is called ἐκτενὴς προσευχὴ, Act. xii. 5. *inſtant prayers*, or *without ceaſing*. This crying to God was typified by the ſounding of trumpets, *Numb.* x. 9. *When the enemie oppreſſes you, ye ſhall blow with the trumpets, and ye ſhall be remembred before the* LORD, *and ye ſhall be ſaved from your enemies. Clamores orationum ſunt clangores tubarum.* Earneſt prayers are loud and ſhrill Trumpets in God's ears.

(2.) And as theſe trumpets of Prayer muſt be loud, ſo they muſt
B be laſting. Theſe cries are day and night, inſtant and conſtant prayers. Strength and length of Devotion, are the two wings of Prayer. *Paul* calls it *perſevering in Prayer*. We muſt not have *Bethulian* Devotions, *Judith* vii. If God will not deliver us within five days, we will give over our prayers. Faſting and Prayer, that's the devotion of the day; and Watchings and Prayer, that's the devotion of the night. There were a Society of Monks in *Conſtantinople*, called *Monachi inſomnes*, ſome of which company were praying at all ſeaſons of the night. Well, that exceſs of devotion is laid aſide. Alaſs! who breaks his ſleep to pray and mourn for the afflictions of the Church? The Ship is in a
C tempeſt, and ready to ſink, and *Jonah* is got into a warm Cabbin and is faſt aſleep. Chriſt commends this Watching unto Prayer, under the Parable of him that at midnight went to borrow bread of his neighbour, and by importunity prevailed with him, *Luke* xi. An unſeaſonable hour for the man to riſe; but God likes ſuch importunities. Theſe *nocturni mendicatores*, as *Auguſtine* calls them, theſe mid-night Beggars they are welcome to God, which like importunate Suiters will obſerve no *decorum* of Time and Place; but will haunt him whom they ſue to, where ever they can find him. *Non tantum offerunt Deo preces, ſed ingeruut & impingunt*: Enforce their prayers
D upon him, and extort a grant from him. Like thoſe men that brought the Palſie-man to Chriſt; if the doors be ſhut, they will untile the houſe, and break up the roof, but they will bring him to Chriſt that he might be cured.

We have done with the Aſſertion, *God will avenge*. Come we,

Secondly, To the prevention of an intervening Objection, *Though he bear long with them*. He will avenge his Elect, but he takes time, he doth not preſently either reſcue them, or repay their perſecutors. And this delay, 'tis a ſtrong temptation.

Firſt, Here is a temptation of Diffidence in the Saints oppreſſed.
E *David* ſuffered this temptation, *Pſal.* lxx. 7, 8, 9. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promiſe fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* So again he complains of this delay, *Pſal.* xxii. 2. *O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou heareſt not; and in the night ſeaſon, and am not ſilent.* And then, 77

Secondly

Sermon I.

Secondly, This delay, 'tis a temptation of Preſumption to the Churches enemies; *They ſay, God hath forſaken him, perſecute him, and take him, for there is none to deliver him.* Well our Saviour tells us 'tis neither ſo, nor ſo: That delay, 'tis not ῥᾳθυμία, but μακροθυμία, not negligence, but patience; ὐ βραδύνει ἀλλὰ μακροθυμεῖ, ſaith St. *Peter*, 'tis not ſlackneſs but forbearance.

'Tis patience, and but patience.

I. To theſe perſecutors 'tis but his patience, he doth not forgive them.

II. To his Elect 'tis but patience, he doth not forget them. God will have his patience to have a perfect work. He ſets back the glory of his Juſtice in puniſhing; I, and the glory of his mercy in delivering, that he may ſet forth the glory of his patience in forbearing. And he is thus patient, to teach us patience. 'Tis one great end why he calls us to ſufferings, *that tribulation may work patience*, Rom. v. 3. Patience is one of the higheſt Graces that a Chriſtian is capable of in this life. *Let patience have her perfect work*, ſaith St. *James*, *that ye may be perfected, and entire, wanting nothing.* A patient Chriſtian is a moſt accompliſhed Chriſtian. Such are Scholars of the higheſt Form in the School of Chriſt. *I will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my Name.* 'Twas St. *Paul*'s Leſſon that God taught him, *Acts* ix. 16.

Now this forbearance of God, e're he revengeth, hath three meaſures to proportion it. The

1. Is *menſura tolerantiæ*; he will ſuffer his to be oppreſſed no more then they can endure. Though he doth not lighten their burthens, yet he will ſtrengthen their backs. Though he doth not preſently deliver them, yet he will ſupport them. The

2. Is *menſura utilitatis*; they ſhall ſuffer no more then will turn to their good. *'Tis for our profit that we may be partakers of his holineſs.* The ſick man would be rid of his Phyſick: *Sed medicus non capit conſilium ab ægroto*; the Phyſician conſults with his Patients neceſſity, not with his fanſie. Leſs then ſo much will do no good. The

3. Is *menſura orationis*. He forbears to deliver them till he hath quickned up their prayers to a full improvement. Sufferings work kindly when they beget prayers to God, and earneſt ſupplications. When they are come to the due pitch, then he will anſwer this poor Widow, the Church; *O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou deſireſt.* That's one reaſon *Auguſtine* gives of theſe delayes in God; *Si non dat ad horam, exercet quærentem, non contemnit petentem.* He helps not preſently to encreaſe and exerciſe thy prayer and devotion. And again, *Primo nos capaces reddit, deinde capaces factos implet.* Earneſt prayer hath a virtue of dilating and enlarging our heart; when that's enlarged, then God ſupplies it. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*, Pſal. lxxxi. 10. Till then ſay to thy ſoul, as *David* ſpeaks to his, *Pſal.* xxvii. 14. *Tarry the* LORD'S *leiſure, Be of good courage, he ſhall ſtrengthen thy heart; wait, I ſay, on the* LORD.

And that thou mayeſt do ſo with more comfort, liſten to the laſt part of the Text, which is,

Thirdly,

A Thirdly, The Confirmation of this promiſe; *I tell you, he will avenge them ſpeedily*. And here we have both the Aſſurance, and the Aſſurer.

Firſt, The *Aſſurance* is, *He will avenge them ſpeedily*: and *Secondly*, The *Aſſurer* is Chriſt himſelf; *I tell you*. We have Chriſt's own word for it.

I. In the *Aſſurance* here is an amends for all his delay. Indeed he ſets out to this work of avenge leiſurely; but then he puts forward and mends his pace ſwiftly; *He doth it ſpeedily*.

Long delayes, and yet ſpeedy ſupplies! theſe ſeem to be inconſiB ſtent.

To reconcile theſe two durations, we muſt know there is a double meaſure and eſtimate of them.

1. To ſenſe, and feeling, and natural apprehenſion, our ſufferings ſeem long, and God's deliverances leiſurely, and but ſlow-paced. *Uſq; quò, Domine, uſque quó? How long, Lord, how long?* But to Faith his help is ſpeedy, his deliverance at hand. Faith will not be overhaſty, loves not to put God out of his pace. *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*: that's Faith's aſſurance, *Heb.* x. 37.

C 2. And then ſecondly, the eſtimate is comparative. Compare our time of ſufferings with the time of our refreſhings and deliverances, and our ſufferings will not ſeem long, nor our deliverance late. *Hoc modicum longum videtur, quoniam adhuc agitur: ſed cùm finitum fuerit, tunc ſentiemus quàm modicum fuerat.* Aug. As they ſay in Philoſophy, "Things have a double exiſtence, one *in menſura temporis*, "another *in menſura æternitatis*: So our ſufferings are in the meaſure of time; but our deliverances have a meaſure of eternity. In compare with our everlaſting refreſhments, our ſufferings here are but momentany afflictions, *Eſai.* liv. 7, 8. *For a ſmall moment have I forſaD ken thee, but with great mercy will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee. Quicquid finem habet, breve eſt.*

3. He is ſaid to do a thing ſpeedily, that doth it,

1. Moſt ſeaſonably.

2. With the greateſt advantage; and

3. That doth it throughly. As the delivery out of *Egypt* was done,

(1.) In its own proper ſeaſon, at the very nick of time that God had appointed.

E (2.) It was with great advantage, they came out of *Egypt* full fraught with riches. A plentiful recompence for all their oppreſſions.

(3.) It was a thorough deliverance; they never ſaw their oppreſſours more.

Such ſhall be the deliverances of God's Elect out of their afflictions. Moſt ſeaſonable in that good hour God hath prefixed. *The*

Sermon I.

Viſion is for an appointed time, though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, and not tarry, Habak. ii. 3. Then it ſhall be with much gain and ſpiritual advantage. So that thou ſhalt ſay, *'Twas good for me, that I was afflicted.* Laſtly, it will be a thorough revenge upon their enemies. It ſhall be ἐν τάχει to them; take it either way, ἐν τάχει, *ſpeedily*; a little time of their domineering, in compare with the large time in their revenge and puniſhment: Or ἐν τάχει, *ſuddenly*, when they leaſt look for it, *God ſhall ſhoot at them: with an arrow ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded*, Pſal. lxiv. 7. When they are in their height, and ruff, then *how ſhall they be brought into deſolation, as in a moment! Oh, how ſuddenly, ſhall they conſume, periſh, and come to a fearful end!* Pſal. lxxiii. 19.

That's the *Aſſurance*; and,

II. The *Aſſurer* is Chriſt himſelf; *I tell you.* And take the weight of it in theſe three expreſſions.

1. *I tell you*: *Veritas dixit*: He, that is the *Amen, the faithful and true Witneſs*, he aſſures us of it. *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak*: he can neither deceive, nor be deceived.

2. *Caput Electorum dicit*; Chriſt, the head of the Elect, aſſures us that his Elect ſhall be avenged. *Caput & corpus unus eſt Chriſtus.* That near union makes our ſufferings to be his ſufferings, our cauſe to be his cauſe. *Why perſecuteſt thou me?* not my Servants, and Diſciples, but me: he takes it to himſelf. *Ariſe, O Lord, and maintain thine own cauſe.*

3. *Judex perſecutorum dicit*: The dreadful Judge of ungodly men, that perſecute his ſervants, He ſaith it. *He will break the yoke of his burthen, and the rod of his oppreſſours, as in the day of Midian*, Eſai. ix. 4. How is that? We find two dayes of deſtruction upon the *Midianites.*

1. In *Judg.* vii. There he ſet the *Midianites* one againſt another. *Verſ.* 22. *The Lord ſet every mans ſword againſt his fellow*: they wrought their own deſtruction.

2. Another deſtruction of the *Midianites* we find *Numb.* xxxi. 3. *Avenge the LORD on the Midianites*; then there was not one *Iſraelite* loſt, not one *Midianite* ſaved. Such ſhall be the avenge of God for his Church upon their enemies. Then the Decree of God's Election ſhall bring forth, as *Zephanie* ſpeaks, *Chap.* ii. 2. a woful birth to the Churches oppreſſours, but a joyful birth to God's elect ones. We ſhall call the children of that birth, as *Joſeph* named his ſons that were born to him in *Egypt*. He called one *Manaſſeh*, Forgetful, *for God hath made me to forget all my toil*: and he called the other *Ephraim*, Fruitful; *for God hath cauſed me to be fruitful in the Land of my affliction.* I have got good by it: *We ſhall reap the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs by it*, Heb. xii. 11.

A SERMON ON St. MARK vi. 20.

For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a juſt man, and an holy, and obſerved him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

AS in the Parable which our Saviour propounds of the *Sower that went forth to ſow*, 'tis ſaid, *The ſeed fell* into ſeveral ſorts of ground; ſome was *ſtonie*, ſome *thornie*, other *good-conditioned ſoil* and *fruitful*: ſo it fares with the preaching of the Word of God, (which was the moral and meaning of that Parable) the Miniſtry of it meets with ſeveral ſorts of Auditors: ſome that receive it into honeſt and good hearts, and fructifie by it; others that yield to it an outward reſpect and ſeeming conformity, but proceed no further; and then others there be that neglect and deſpiſe it, and openly oppoſe it.

All theſe appeared in *John* Baptiſts Miniſtry.

Firſt, The *good ſoil* were thoſe *that offered violence unto heaven.*

Secondly, St. *John* met with a ſecond ſort of Auditors, ſome plauſible Profeſſors; who though they meant not to be real and reſolute Chriſtians, yet they liked well of *John*'s Preaching and Miniſtry, and yielded a very ſpecious conformity to it. And then,

Thirdly, Some of *John*'s ſeed fell among thorns, and briars, and brambles; mockers, and deſpiſers, that withſtood, and oppoſed him. Such were the Lawyers, the Scribes, and the Phariſees that ſet *John* at naught, and would not ſubmit to him.

From the firſt ſort we may learn the neceſſity of ſerious and ſtrong reſolution in matter of Religion; and then in the ſecond ſort, we may learn and obſerve the vanity and unprofitableneſs of a bare outward profeſſion: And then, in the third ſort, we may take notice of the impiety and wickedneſs of a malitious oppoſition.

Sermon I.

The words which I have read unto you, they give us an inſtance of the ſecond ſort of *John* Baptiſt's Auditors, by ſhewing us what effect and ſucceſs *John*'s Miniſtry had with King *Herod*; what conformity and obedience it wrought in him to the Word of God. And here is a fair teſtimony that the Evangeliſt gives him of many ſpecious performances in point of Religion. And that we may take the better eſtimate of it, we will reduce what he had to ſay of it, to theſe three Conſiderations. A

Firſt, Let us conſider *Herod*'s proficiencie in matter of Religion, how far he went.

Secondly, Let us conſider the unſufficiencie of this his progreſs in Religion, and wherein he failed. B

Thirdly, Then we ſhall take notice of *Herod*'s deficiencie, and falling from that degree of proficiencie, to which he had attained.

For the firſt, *Herod*'s proficiencie in the entertainment of *John*'s Miniſtry, and conformity to it, will appear in theſe ſeveral reſpects, which the Text tells us he did to him. The

Firſt was *Herods* preſervation of *John* Baptiſts life, and ſheltring, and protecting him againſt *Herodias* malice. In the foregoing verſe, 'tis ſaid *Herodias* had a *quarrel againſt him, and would have killed him, but ſhe could not; for* Herod *feared* John, *knowing that he was a juſt man*, and would not ſuffer *Herodias* to wrong him, and to have her will of him, but hindred any attempt that was made againſt him, not onely by the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, but his beloved *Herodias* muſt forbear to hurt him. C

Obſerve it; *Wicked and unregenerate men may take ſuch a liking to the Word of God, and be ſo affected with it, as to become maintainers and protectours, and defenders of the ſervants of God that miniſter it to them.* It fared thus with the Prophet *Jeremie*, when the Prieſts, his enemies, would have had him be put to death, and ſtirred up the people and inſenſed them againſt him, yet then, ſome of the Elders (no very good men) interceded for him, diſſwaded the people from ſo bloody a fact; told them how the Prophet *Micah* had ſaid as much as *Jeremie* had ſaid, and yet was not puniſhed for it; and urged the foul fact of *Jehojakim* againſt the Prophet *Uriah*, Jer.xxvi.20. *Zedekiah* alſo, though no better then *Herod*, yet he lends protection to the Prophet *Jeremie*, adviſes him to hide himſelf from thoſe wicked Princes that ſought his life, and would have deſtroyed him. D

How often were the common people a ſhelter and ſafeguard to Chriſt againſt the fury of his Enemies? Many times the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* would have deſtroyed him, but the people hindred them. *Mark* xii.2. there 'tis ſaid, *They ſought to lay hold on him, but they feared the people.* Luk.xxii.2. *The Chief Prieſts and Scribes ſought how they might kill him, but they feared the people.* And St. *Luke* gives the reaſon of it, why the people thus ſheltered and protected our Saviour, *they were taken with his preaching.* And though little good was wrought in them in point of Converſion, yet it prevailed with them E

to

A to ſet themſelves for his ſafety and preſervation. *Luke* xix. 47. *The Chief Prieſts ſought to deſtroy him, but could not find what they might do; for all the people were very attentive to hear him*; they were taken with his preaching.

Indeed this work when 'tis done out of piety to ſhelter God's Miniſters, 'tis graciouſly accepted of God, and highly rewarded. Such an one was good *Obadiah*. When *Ahab* and *Jezebel* perſecuted God's Prophets, and ſought to deſtroy them, that holy man he hid God's Prophets from their fury, and fed, and ſuccoured them, 1 *Kings* xviii. 13. And the like good work did *Ebed-melech* in preſerving of *Jeremy*,
B who drew him out of the Dungeon, and ſaved him from periſhing: What ſaith God to him? *I will ſurely deliver thee, and thou ſhalt not be given into the hands of the men of whom thou art afraid*, Jer. xxxix. 17. It bred great comfort and confidence in good *Nehemiah*, that he had been a ſuccourer of theſe ſervants of God; *Remember me, O God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the houſe of my God, and the offices thereof*, Nehem. xiii. 14. What an earneſt prayer doth *Paul* make for *Oneſiphorus*, who had been a comfort to him in his ſufferings! 2 *Tim.* i. 16. *The* LORD *give mercy to the houſe of Oneſiphorus, for he often refreſhed me, and was not aſhamed of*
C *my chain.* This work done out of Religious Grounds will breed comfort to thee; but if it be done out of *Herod*'s ſpirit onely, truſt not unto it, for it will fail thee.

But then withall, conſider in what caſe are they that have not gone ſo far as *Herod* in this point of protection; meer *Gallios*, that can ſee *Soſthenes* beaten and miſuſed, and never care for it, *Act.* xviii. 17. If *Herod* be damned, that preſerved *John* Baptiſt; what became of *Herodias* that thirſted after his blood? If *Lyſias* that reſcued St. *Paul* be no better then a caſt-away, what became of thoſe Jews that would have deſtroyed him? *Paul*'s ſiſters ſon that diſcovered the Conſpi-
D racie againſt *Paul*, Act. xxiii. 16. (St. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith, we read of no other good of him) what ſhall we think of thoſe that combined together to deſtroy and murder him? That's the firſt ſtep of *Herod*'s proficiencie, his preſervation of *John* Baptiſt.

Secondly, A ſecond effect of *John*'s Miniſtry in *Herod* is, that it wrought in him an awful regard of Saint *John*'s perſon. The Text ſaith, *He feared John*. *John* Baptiſt had got authority over *Herod*, kept him in ſome aw; he durſt not do what he would, as long as *John* was about him.

Obſerve, *The word of God may ſo far prevail upon an unregene-*
E *rate man, as to work in him a fear, and awful regard, and to captivate him to the Authority of Religion in the Servants of God.* Such Authority did God put upon *Moſes* his perſon; he made him a God unto *Pharaoh*; and ſo 'tis ſaid of him, *Exod.* xi. 3. *The man Moſes was very great in the Land of Egypt, in the ſight of Pharaoh's ſervants, and in the ſight of the people.* His perſon and preſence was awful to them. And ſo Saint *Chryſoſtom* obſerves it of Saint *Paul*,

Sermon I.

Paul, where ever he came, amongſt the Soldiers, amongſt the Marriners, ſtill he bore ſway amongſt them. Not that either *Paul* did, or Miniſters ought, to intermeddle in matters that do not belong unto them; (A practice that hath kindled more fire in Chriſtendom then can eaſily be quenched) But the eminent Sanctity of *John* and *Paul*, and ſuch Saints as they, hath oftentimes a power upon other men, to reſtrain their enormities and to keep them in compaſs. A

Yes, this is the excellencie and honour of Religion and Piety; when it ſhines in it ſtrength, it dazles the eyes of wicked men, makes them wonder at it, and ſtand in aw of thoſe in whom it is evident. That's the meaning of thoſe words in the *Pſalmiſt*, *They ſhall bind their Kings in chains, and their Nobles with fetters of Iron; ſuch honour have all his Saints*, Pſal. cxlix. 8. Alaſs, poor *John* Baptiſt, what could he do to *Herod* to make him afraid of him! *Herod* was not under his control; yes but the luſtre of St. *John*'s Sanctity commands, and extorts regard and reverence. The Image of God in *Adam* was a terrour to the Beaſts: and when this Image is repaired in the Saints, it is awful to wicked men. *Moſes* his face, when it ſhined, the people were afraid of him. Piety, even in the pooreſt Saint, it commands reſpect even from the greateſt; whereas without it, all other dignity begets a ſecret contempt. B C

And as Religion commands it, ſo you ſee *Herod* is taken with this fear of *John*; he durſt not take his full ſwinge in ill courſes, for fear of him. So *Ahab* ſtood in fear of *Elias*. The men of *Gilgal* were ſtartled at the preſence of *Samuel*; they were afraid as ſoon as he came amongſt them. That ſacred Inſcription on the High-prieſt's Forehead, *Holineſs to the LORD*, made that mighty Conquerour *Alexander* ſtoop to *Jaddus* the High-prieſt of God, and do reverence to him. So then,

I. Doth *Herod* ſtand in fear of *John*? 'tis then no evidence of Piety and Goodneſs not to do evil for fear of others. Many ſeem to be good becauſe they durſt not diſpleaſe others that have authority over them; they are good, becauſe they are under good Monitours: as King *Joaſh* would be religious, all the dayes of the High-prieſt *Jehojada*, he ſtood in ſome aw of him. No, he is good that can be good in a crooked Generation, *cuſtode remoto*. As *Paul* commends the *Philippians*, that they were obedient, *not onely in his preſence*, but even *in his abſence alſo*. If thy goodneſs be for fear of men onely, it will dye with them; but if for fear of God, it will laſt and continue. And then, D

II. Did *Herod* fear *John*, and kept within ſome compaſs and bounds of moderation becauſe of *John*? in what caſe are they that are of his temper in the Goſpel, that could boaſt and profeſs that he neither *feared God, nor reverenced man*? Licentious, audacious, prophane Wretches, ſuch as thoſe graceleſs Jews were, that when they ſaw *Stephens* face ſhine like an Angel, yet durſt oppoſe him, and offer violence to him? Such there be that *caſt off all fear, deſpiſers of thoſe that* E

are

Sermon I.

A *are good*, as St. *Paul* brands them, 2 *Tim.* iii. 3. Such as *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Prov.* v. 12. *that deſpiſe all inſtruction*, and *ſcorn to be reproved*: like that graceleſs Wretch that thruſt away *Moſes*, when he did reprove him, *Who made thee a Ruler, or a Controller?* Or, like as the wicked *Sodomites* did to holy *Lot*, *Wilt thou take upon thee to reprove and reſtrain us?* We will offer villany to thee alſo.

Thirdly, A third effect that was wrought in *Herod* toward *John* Baptiſt, is a worthy eſteem and acknowledgment of St. *John*'s piety and ſanctity, and thoſe Graces that were in him; he accounted him a juſt man and holy. 'Tis a full teſtimony that *Herod* gives of him. Firſt
B he acknowledges him to be a juſt man in his converſation with men: but that is not all, he accounts him to be an holy man in his piety towards God. Both theſe make him a compleat Chriſtian, and beyond exception. He was neither injurious towards men, nor impious towards God. *John* walked in the ſteps of his Parents, *Zachary*, and *Elizabeth*, of whom St. *Luke* ſaith, *They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of God, without reproof.* He that hath not both theſe, hath neither of them indeed and in truth. Some there be, that content themſelves with the *form of Godlineſs*, ſeem to make great Conſcience of Duties of Religion; but Juſtice and true
C dealing with men, they never regard it. So they ſeem to be godly on the Sabbath, they can be injurious and malicious all the week after. Such were the Scribes and Phariſees, they are very inquiſitive after the great Commandment-Duties towards God; *Maſter*, ſay they to Chriſt, *which is the great Commandment in the Law?* and Chriſt reſolves them; that is the *Love of God*: But then he adds, that the ſecond is like unto it, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* I, but Chriſt might have ſpared that, that's more then the Phariſees looked after. Others there are, that in point of juſt dealing, and common honeſty, ſeem to be careful; if they wrong no man, be injurious
D to no man, it makes no matter with them to be unholy, and prophane in duties to God. No, that Scribe in the Goſpel, that joyned both duties together, *the love of God with all our hearts*, and *the loving our Neighbour as our ſelves*; Chriſt gave him this encouraging teſtimony, *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God*, Mark. xii. 34. Well, *John* was both theſe, Holy and Juſt, in an eminent manner: and ſee *Herod* though void of both, yet he takes notice of both in *John*, and doth approve them.

Obſerve it; *Carnal, and unconverted, and ſenſual men, yet can come thus far, as to have the Virtues, and Graces, that ſhine in others in a fair*
E *eſteem, and in ſome admiration.* There is an excellencie in holineſs that wins eſteem even there where it is not embraced. The wicked King of *Iſrael* would gladly hear of the great works of *Eliſha*, *Gehazi* muſt needs relate them to him, and he much admired them. Thus Holy *Daniel* was highly eſteemed by *Nebuchadnezzar*; *The Spirit of the Holy God was in him.* The ſervants of the High-prieſts ſpake honourably of Chriſt, *Never man ſpake like him.* And ſo the people had honourable thoughts

Sermon I.

thoughts of him, *He is a good man, he hath done all things well.* Yet all these came short of Piety. 'Tis not the approbation of Piety in others, no, nor the admiration of it; but the imitation of it that will stand thee in stead. Even the unclean spirit that possessed the Damosel at *Philippi*, could say of *Paul* and *Silas*; *These are the servants of the most High God.* A

Fourthly, There is a fourth effect wrought in *Herod* towards *John* Baptist, that's a reverend behaviour towards him. The Text saith, *He observed him*, had a care to please him in his demeanure, he would be loath to offend him as little as he could. Observance is a regardful and respective carriage, studious to give content, avoiding occasions of discontenting. *Herod* would be loath to have *John* displeased. B

Observe it; *A carnal unconverted man, may be so affected towards Religion, as to be willing to accommodate his carriage to the best content of the servants of God.* Thus we see even wicked Kings have been studious to observe and give good content to the Prophets of God. The Prophet *Elisha* had such power at the Court, that he could undertake and prevail in any suit. He offers his help to the *Shunamite*, to speed any request for her, 2 *King.* iv. 13. *Wouldest thou be spoken for to the King, or the Captain of the Host?* It seems the King would deny him nothing, but was desirous to gratifie the Prophet in any Suit he should make. Even the greatest Personages have desired their countenance to put respect upon them. *Saul* sued to *Samuel* to go along with him. The company of the Prophet would be an honour to him; *Honour me, I pray thee, before the Elders of my people*, 1 Sam. xv. 30. It was complaint enough against *Adonijah*, that *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Zadok* the Priest were neglected by him at his Coronation, 1 *King.* i. 26. Many a wicked man would be willing, if ordinary respects would do it, to retain the good opinion of the servants of God, and to keep good terms with them, and to be studious and regardful of them. C

Fifthly, Here is yet a fifth effect of *John*'s Ministry in *Herod*, that is, a willing attention to his preaching. The Text saith, *He heard him gladly.* And this fact of *Herod* affords this observation; That *Even an unregenerate man, living in a state of Sensuality* (such an one was *Herod*) *may be a diligent, and constant, and a willing, and ready frequenter of the preaching of the Word.* *Herod* must needs have *John* to the Court and make him his Ghostly Father, and apply himself readily unto *John*'s Ministry; *He heard him*, and *he heard him gladly*; much delighted he was in the Baptists preaching; no question, would not miss a Sermon of *John*'s upon every idle toy, or forbear to hear him upon any slight occasion. So Saint *Paul* tells us of this great forwardness in many unsound Christians, that would be great frequenters of this part of God's Worship, in hearing of Sermons, 2 *Tim.* iv. 3. *They had itching ears, a spiritual prurisie* to hear the Word; they would heap to themselves a multitude of Teachers. Thus also *Ezekiel* tells us of the great forwardness of the Elders of *Israel*, they would come daily to hear *Ezekiel*, they were very forward, and would call upon one another D E

Sermon I.

A ther to frequent the Prophet; every one to his brother would ſay, *Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that comes forth from the* LORD, Ezek. xxxiii. 30. and yet all of them falſehearted and diſſembling Hypocrites. Thus *Felix* muſt needs hear St. *Paul* preach; he ſent for him often, and communed with him, *Act.* xxiv. 26. And King *Agrippa* is much taken with St. *Paul*'s reaſonings in matters of Religion. O! *Micah*, if he can get himſelf a Chapel, and a Levite to be his Prieſt, promiſes to himſelf, that God will do him good, and bleſs and proſper him, *Judg.* xvii. 13.

It ſhews the vanity of many mens Religion, that place all their Pi-
B ety in *Herod*'s devotion; if they can give St. *John* the hearing, and get ſome taſte and reliſh of a Sermon, and be a little forwarder then ſome prophane men, in frequenting the publick Worſhip, they dare tell Chriſt of it at the day of Judgment, and claim heaven for it; *Lord, Lord, open unto us, for thou haſt taught in our ſtreets*, Luke xiii. 25, 26. and they add too, *We heard thee gladly*: Heaven Gates muſt fly open to ſuch as they.

Sixthly, There is yet a further ſtep of proficiency in *Herod*, that was a very ſpecious Conformity to St. *John*'s Doctrine. The Text tells us, *He did many things*; yielded obedience to many inſtructions. Saint
C *John*'s preaching prevailed with him to the doing and practiſing of many things commendable. And that offers to us this Obſervation; That, *An unregenerate man may come thus far, as to be won, and perſwaded by the Word to the performance of many good duties. Herod* it ſeems, yielded obedience to *John*'s preaching in many particulars.

I. In his *private Converſation*, 'tis like he abſtained from ſome vicious courſes.

II. In his *publick Adminiſtration* and *Government*, he liſtned to Saint *John* in reforming of abuſes, made many good Laws for the well-ordering of his Kingdom, and repreſſing of vices. And,

D III. Was not wanting in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs. He countenanced *John*'s preaching, aſſiſted him againſt Gain-ſayers and Oppoſers. He did not onely *hear him gladly*, but was perſwaded by him to do, yea to do many things in conformity to his Doctrine.

'Tis much to come thus far, not onely to afford him Audience; but to perform Obedience: not to reſt in the notional part, but to make ſome progreſs in the practick part of Religion. Yet ſo did *Herod* and many others, that never attained to true Converſion, and ſo fell ſhort of life and Salvation. *Pharaoh*, he was brought oft to yield to *Moſes* in ſundry particulars: *Firſt*, The men ſhould go to ſerve God;
E then he will ſuffer their little ones to go; then they ſhall take their Cattle along with them. So *Ahab*, though a moſt ungodly man, yet *Elijah* prevailed with him: at his inſtance, the Idolatrous Prieſts of *Baal* were deſtroyed, and he brought to ſorrow, and heavineſs, and ſome repentance for his ſin. So *Judas*, and *Demas*, and *Ananias*, in the New Teſtament did many things in conformity to the Doctrine of the Goſpel. Nay, 'tis poſſible a man may not onely do many things,

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but ſuffer many things for the Goſpels ſake, and yet all in vain. St. *Paul* asks the *Galatians* this Queſtion, *Have you ſuffered ſo many things in vain?* Gal. iii. 4. 'Tis poſſible a man may do, and venture far in the cauſe of Religion, and yet at laſt, tire and give over. A

We have done with the firſt Conſideration of the Text, and ſeen the progreſs and proficiency that *Herod* made in matter of Religion. Now let us conſider,

Secondly, The unſufficiency of this his progreſs, and ſee wherein it failed and came ſhort. And this will appear to us, if we take a ſecondary and ſummary view of all thoſe ſteps of proficiency that we have diſcovered in him. All which we will reduce to three heads. B

Firſt, The firſt is his worthy eſteem of *John*'s Perſon and Piety.

Secondly, The ſecond is his diligent and willing attention to his Doctrine and Miniſtry. And then,

Thirdly, The third is his Obedience which he yielded to St. *John*'s preaching, in doing many things in a very ſpecious conformity.

Firſt, For his eſteem and regard of *John*'s Perſon and Piety. 'Tis very queſtionable, as unſound, upon the ſuſpicion of thoſe falſe grounds, from which it did ariſe; and we may ſee three ſuſpicious grounds of it.

I. The firſt ſuſpicious ground of this high eſteem of *John*, we may juſtly conceive, was Popularity. The world was grown into a great admiration of *John*; they wondered at his holineſs, they took him to be more then a man, ſome incarnate Angel, his life was ſo conſpicuous for all kind of Sanctimony. No marvel if *Herod* eſteem him, when all men admire him. C

Obſerve it, *Popularity and conformity to the multitude of other men, may bring on even a wicked man to regard Religion.* When Religion is in requeſt and grown into faſhion, and becomes a matter of reputation, 'tis no great matter then to become an admirer and honourer of it. *Simon Magus* will be a Diſciple and turn Chriſtian, when the whole City of *Samaria* liſtens to the Apoſtles, and embraces their Doctrine. The Crowd will carry a man thither, whither of himſelf he would not go. Stream, and Wind, and Tide will give motion to that, which would never ſtir of it ſelf. *All men throng thee*, ſaith *Peter* to Chriſt, *and doſt thou wonder that ſome do touch thee?* D

This may prove a *teſtimony*, and trial of the truth and ſoundneſs of thy Religion; it will appear what thy Religion is, when the ſtream of the multitude turns another way. 'Tis eaſie to follow Chriſt when all the multitude brings him in triumph, and ſing *Hoſannah* to him: But when they carry him out to *Mount Calvary*, and cry, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*, dareſt thou ſtick to him then, bear his Croſs for him, with *Simon* of *Cyrene*, beg his dead body with *Joſeph*, ſtand by his Grave with *Mary Magdalene*? Dareſt thou be a Chriſtian, when Chriſtianity brings a contempt with it? Wilt thou ſpeak in the Cauſe of God with *Jeremie*, when the *word of the LORD is a reproach to thee?* 'Tis a ſign thy Religion is out of Piety not Popularity. E

A II. A ſecond ſuſpicious ground of *Herod*'s reſpect to *John* that makes it unſufficient, is Policy. *Herod* was a Fox, as our Saviour terms him. He thought it ſafe to hold in with *John*, to get him to the Court, and to put Countenance upon him, it would ſatisfie the people well. He had a ſtitch againſt *John*; but *he feared the people*, Matth. xiv. 5. *Herod* was an intruder, and very unacceptable to the Jews, and therefore to endear and naturalize himſelf to their good opinion, he turns Proſelyte, is circumciſed, all to ſtrengthen his Kingdom. The people might have mutined, it might take well with the people, and gain upon their good will, this entertainment of *John*. *Jehu* knew what he did
B when he acquainted himſelf with that holy man *Jonadab*, and took him into his Chariot; it would pleaſe the people well to ſee *Jehu* and *Jonadab* ſo well acquainted, 2 *King*. x. 15.

This is the ſcantling of many mens Religion. The Apoſtle St. *Jude* gives a Character of them; *They have mens perſons in admiration, becauſe of advantage*, Verſ. 16. they hope to gain and proſper by it. This was *Demetrius* his Divinity, cry up *Diana* for a great Goddeſs, *Act*. xix. 28. He gives the reaſon of it to his Companions; *Sirs, you know, that by this craft we get our wealth*. They counted Gain Godlineſs. It was the *Sechemites* Religion, they would be circumciſed in po-
C licy to gain *Jacob*'s eſtate and goods. *Let us conſent to them to be circumciſed, ſhall not their cattle and their ſubſtance be ours?* Gen. xxxiv. 23. This brought on *Judas* to be a Diſciple; he heard talk of a *Kingdom* that Chriſt ſhould have, and ſo became his follower. He hoped for an Office and promotion in it. Let us ſeem to be zealous, and cry out of abuſes, and call for Reformation, ſome good Office or Lordſhip ſhall fall to our ſhare by it.

This will be diſcovered when Piety and Policy ſtand in oppoſition, and draw ſeveral wayes. When two men walk together, 'tis not known to which of them the ſervant belongs that waits upon
D them; but when they part, and take ſeveral wayes, then it will appear to whom the ſervant belongs, to him whom he follows, and forſakes the other. So when Piety and Policy go in the ſame Rode, we cannot diſcern whether it be Piety or Policy that leads thee that way; but when Piety calls one way, and Policy another, if thou forſake Piety, and cleave unto Policy, all thy former Religion was but Craft and Policy. Thus *Judas* was diſcovered; the ſuppoſed Kingdom of Chriſt went not forward, oppoſition increaſed, the multitude fell from Chriſt, his followers were like to ſuffer perſecution, it makes *Judas* bethink himſelf of ſome other courſe; he forſakes Chriſt, and
E joyns with the prevailing party of the High-prieſts faction. This alſo was ſeen in *Jehu*'s reformation: he deſtroys *Baal*, which was *Ahab*'s Idolatry, out of *Iſrael* very zealouſly; but had he done it out of Piety and for the love of God, he would have deſtroyed *Jeroboam*'s Idolatry, his Golden Calves that were worſhipped at *Bethel*. No, 'tis ſaid, *that* Jehu *clave to the ſin of* Jeroboam. Is was a politick Idolatry, it was a great aſſurance to the Kingdom; it would be

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dangerous to let his people frequent *Jeruſalem*, they might fall from him, and return in allegiance to the houſe of *David*. This was it that caſt, and condemned Chriſt in the judgment of *Pilate*: he ſtrove a long time againſt the importunity of the Jews that would have him put Chriſt to death: he was deſirous to ſave him, proteſted he found no cauſe to condemn him. But when the Jews preſſed him with a politick Argument, and told him, it would not be ſafe for him to acquit Chriſt; they ſaid, *If thou let this man go, thou art not Caſar's friend*, Joh. xix. 12. that ſpeech prevailed with him and ſtruck all dead. When *Pilate* heard that ſaying, he made no more ado but condemned Chriſt preſently. He dealt with Chriſt as King *Achiſh* did with *David*, 1 *Sam.* xxix. 9. *As the* LORD *lives, I have not found evil in thee, nevertheleſs the Lords of the Philiſtines do not favour thee*; I muſt not diſpleaſe them, and ſo he diſcharged him from attending upon him. Upon this ground *Zedechias* forſook the Prophet *Jeremie* to gratifie the Princes that would deſtroy *Jeremie*; *He is in your hand, do with him what you will*, I can deny you nothing, *Jer.* xxxviii. 5. Thus the World turns Piety into Policy, and Self-denial into Self-preſervation. But then,

III. To make the beſt of it, a third ground of *Herod*'s good reſpect to St. *John*, that makes his proficiency to be unſufficient, might be a natural ingenuity, a remainder of right reaſon and common honeſty, which might be in *Herod*, and might move him to think well of *John* Baptiſt, and eſteem worthily of him.

There is in many carnal men ſome candour, and equity, and moderation, which will prevail with them to give ſome approbation, and ſhew ſome affection and reſpect to Religion in others, though they will not embrace and entertain it in themſelves. St. *Paul* tells us of ſome unconverted men that yet *can approve things that are excellent*, Rom. ii. 18. Beſides thoſe things that are truly and properly ſpiritual, there are ſome excellencies that do accompany Piety and Religion, that may be apprehended, and well eſteemed by meer natural men; and accordingly their natural ingenuity will affect and approve them, though they have no true reliſh of that which is indeed ſpiritual in Piety and Religion: Thus deceiving their own hearts as if they loved Religion for the ſanctity of it. St. *Gregory* ſpeaks excellently to this purpoſe, *Sæpe ſibi ipſi mens ipſa mentitur, & fingit ſe de bono opere amare, quod non amat*: "Many a man deceives himſelf, and thinks he "loves that in Religion, which indeed he loves not, but ſome other "thing for it.

1. *Natural ingenuity* will ſee and diſcern a great deal of innocencie in Religion. True Piety and Chriſtianity will make Chriſtians unblamable, inoffenſive, and of an harmleſs converſation: ſo that they gain a good report of them that are without, as *Paul* ſpeaks. Thus St. *Peter* deſcribes good Chriſtians, 1 *Pet.* ii. 12. *They have their converſation honeſt among the Gentiles, that they may by their good works, which they ſhall behold, glorifie God in the day of viſitation.* Such an one

A one was St. *John*, moſt innocent and harmleſs. Thus the people gave teſtimony to *Samuel*, that though they flung off his government, yet they confeſſed he was moſt innocent and unblamable. Thus in the Primitive Times, the more ingenuous Heathens would teſtifie for the Chriſtians. *Plinie* wrought to the Emperour *Trajan*, that the Chriſtians were free from any vice, of unblamable lives, they could find no fault with them. *Bonus vir* Caius Seius, *malus tantùm, quòd Chriſtianus*: 'twas the uſual ſpeech of thoſe Times; "Such an one is a good "man, all the fault is, that he is a Chriſtian. As it was ſaid of *Daniel*, His enemies could find no occaſion or fault in him in all his dealings,
B *Dan.* vi. 4. This innocencie often gains favour and affection to Religion, even from thoſe that are ſtrangers to it.

2. Ingenuity obſerves a great deal of utility and profitableneſs in Religion. Good Chriſtians they are not onely harmleſs and inoffenſive, but they are uſeful, and helpful, and beneficial to the Times and Places wherein they live. *John* had made Publicans, and Soldiers, and the common people more orderly and obedient, and that pleaſed *Herod* well. This gained *Joſeph* much favour with his Maſter, becauſe all things proſpered with him. And *Pharaoh* could ſpie it in *Joſeph*, and honoured it in him; *Can we find ſuch a man as this is, in whom the*
C *Spirit of God is?* he is for our turn, let us employ him to manage the Kingdom. This made *Laban* ſo loth to part with *Jacob*; *I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry; for I have learned by experience, that the* LORD *hath bleſſed me for thy ſake*, Gen. xxx. 27. This moved King *Darius* to honor and prefer *Daniel*; *becauſe an excellent ſpirit was in him, and the King thought to ſet him over the whole Realm*, Dan. vi. 3. Chriſtianity will make every ſervant to be an *Oneſimus*. The very name ſignifies one that is profitable. 'Tis not the Piety, but the Commodity and Profitableneſs of Religion that gains favour and eſteem amongſt worldly men.

D 3. An ingenuous man, though but in the ſtate of Nature, can obſerve a great deal of beauty and comelineſs in Religion. Piety, when it appears in the life of a Chriſtian, is exceeding lovely; as *Solomon* ſpeaks, it *makes the face to ſhine*. Holineſs is amiable, not onely in the eyes of God and good men, but even many a natural man beholds the beauty of it, and cannot but eſteem it. As even that which is commendable in a natural man, is not to be deſpiſed, but regarded by a Chriſtian. As 'tis ſaid of the young man in the Goſpel, that had done many things fairly, that Chriſt looking upon him loved him, *Mark* x. 21. thought well of him for his honeſt converſation: ſo the beauty of Piety
E in a Chriſtian cannot but win ſome fair eſteem from a carnal man. No queſtion *John*'s holineſs was amiable even to *Herod*; his gravity and mortified life did win eſteem to him. Theſe excellencies are diſcernable by an ingenuous, though but a carnal eye, and may procure reſpect; but that which is ſpiritual, the truth, and ſubſtance of it doth not affect them. 'Twas not *John*'s Piety that reliſhed with *Herod*, but theſe *condimenta pietatis*, which were as ſawces and ſweetnings

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unto it, they pleaſed his palat, and made him eſteem *John* Baptiſt for them. That's the firſt Conſideration, the failing and unſufficiency of the eſteem of *John*'s perſon and piety. Come we

Secondly, To the next Conſideration of the ſecond thing obſervable in *Herod*, which was his diligent Attention to St. *John*'s Preaching and Miniſtry; he *heard him gladly*. But even this forwardneſs falls ſhort and will appear unſufficient upon two ſuſpicions.

I. We have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect his Diſpoſition, out of which he did it.

II. We may well ſuſpect the Motives and Grounds that made him thus attentive to *John* Baptiſt's Doctrine.

I. This Attention of *Herod* to *John*'s Preaching ariſes out of a ſuſpicious diſpoſition; 'tis ſaid, *He heard him gladly*, took delight and pleaſure in it; *Not.*

1. This Attention of *Herod*, it was *fundata in paſſione*. All this his forwardneſs in hearing, it was but a paſſion, a pleaſure and delight that he took, and that brought him on to give *John* the hearing. Chriſt tells us that the ſtonie ground received the ſeed, as did the good ground; ſuch are they *that hear the Word*, and *receive it with gladneſs*, take pleaſure in it, it ſuits with their humour. But true Piety digs deeper, builds upon ſtronger and firmer grounds, acts out of judgment and reſolution. A wicked man may have his affections moved, and be preſently ſtirred to hear the Word, and yet his heart may be dead and never wrought upon.

2. This paſſion in *Herod*, it was *preproperous*, and *prepoſterous*: his delight and joy was too forward. Some other motion and affection ſhould have been ſtirred up in him. No queſtion, *John*'s preaching, might it been ſuffered to work kindly, would have ſtirred up fear, and care, and ſorrow, and repentance, and humiliation; we hear of none of theſe; but onely *Herod*'s phanſie was taken, and begat delight in him. The matter of ſalvation, 'tis not a jocund and a ſporting work, it muſt be wrought out with fear and trembling. *Eſay* ſhews with what affection we ſhould hear, *Eſai.* lxvi. 5. *Hear ye the word of the* LORD, *ye that tremble at his word.* Of the two, *Felix* was the better Auditour then *Herod*; *Felix* trembled at *Paul*'s preaching; *Herod* ſmiles, and is much delighted to hear *John* Baptiſt. St. *Auguſtine* reports a ſtory of a wicked and barbarous Cuſtom uſed in *Cæſarea* of a long time; which he hearing of, he repaired to that City and preached againſt it. The people liſtened to him with great attention, and teſtified their delight in his preaching, with many acclamations and ſigns of applauſe. But *Auguſtine* regarded not that, but he brought them to ſighing, and ſorrowing, and ſhedding of tears; then he concluded he had done good upon them. So *Hierom*, "Let not the ap-"planſes, but the tears and groans of thy Auditours be thy commen-"dation.

3. It was *humana paſſio*, he delighted in St. *John*'s preaching with the ſame affection that he ſhewed in other things. *John* preaches, and he

A he pleaſes him; and young *Herodias* ſhe dances, and ſhe pleaſes him; no difference. A religious man even in outward delights, rejoyces ſpiritually; a carnal man, even in ſpiritual things, rejoyces carnally.

Here is the Trial: Receiveſt thou the word as the word of man, or as the Word of God? If as the word of man, then humane affection will be all that thou wilt afford it: but, if as the word of God, then as *Paul* ſpeaks, thou wilt *receive it with joy in the holy Ghoſt*. Try thy Religion by this Touch-ſtone. What other affections bringeſt thou to a Sermon then thou carrieſt with thee to any buſineſs, or paſtime? Comeſt thou with the ſame uncircumciſed and unhallowed ear? if ſo,

B thou comeſt without Piety, and returneſt without Profit.

4. It was *paſſio ſuperabilis*, a paſſion of joy in hearing the word; but it was yet controlable, and eaſily overcome by another delight. His birth-day joy, and his delight he takes in the Damoſels dancing, hath exceeded and overcome all the delight he took in *John*. *John* preached, and pleaſed *Herod*; in comes a Minſtrel with a dance, and carries it clear from *John*, ſhe pleaſes *Herod* a great deal more.

Here is a diſcovery of his unſufficient progreſs. 'Tis not every pang or paſſionate delight, that will do it, but the joy of the Spirit muſt overbear and exceed all carnall joy. What ſaith *David? I take more joy*

C *in thy word, then in mine appointed food.* *Saul* would ſeem to be devout, and to conſult with God, and calls for the Prieſt to bring the Ephod; but e're he hath done his devotion, News comes to him of other buſineſs, and now he is not at leſure to wait upon God. *Withdraw thy hand*, ſaid he to the Prieſt, we muſt mind other matters, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 19. Was *Herod* ever ſo much taken with *John*'s preaching, as to yield to him ſo great a ſuit as he granted to his Minſtrel? She may have what ſhe will, *half his Kingdom*, if ſhe pleaſes, or *John Baptiſt*'s head, if ſhe do demand it. *Narraverunt homines delectationes*

D *multas, ſed non ſicut Lex tua*: ſo *Auguſtine* reads the words of the *Pſalm*. "*The World tells me of many delights, but none ſuch, or ſo* "*ſweet as thy Law is.*

That's the firſt exception, this forwardneſs came from a ſuſpicious paſſion.

II. The Motives that made him thus attentive, are very ſuſpicious.

1. Was it not the Novelty of *John*'s teaching that did thus delight him? Here is a new extraordinary Prophet riſen, that comes with a Doctrine never publiſhed before, and that takes *Herod*, and wins his attention. *Moſes* was preached every Sabbath day, we hear of no

E ſuch forwardneſs to liſten to him. Oh! but a new Divine is come lately into the Country, that hath a ſtrain by himſelf, there will be flocking to him. This made the *Athenians* liſten to St. *Paul*, becauſe he ſeemed to be a Setter-forth of a new Religion. Let St. *John* hold on for ſome time, all this forwardneſs will cool again. What ſaith Chriſt of the Baptiſt? *He was a burning and a ſhining light, and they rejoyced in his light for a ſeaſon*: it held but for a while, ſoon weary of him.

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him. 'Tis but the crackling of Thorns in the fire, a ſudden blaze for a time, and ſoon out again. A

2. Or ſecondly, Was it not ſome generality of Truth that might give *Herod* content? No doubt *John* had many deep Diſcourſes in matters of Divinity about the nature of God, and the Controverſies of the Times. And *Herod* can hear theſe Diſcourſes gladly. A doctrinal, notional Preacher, that can feed the Underſtanding with ſome ſublime apprehenſions in matters of Religion, may find acceptance. There is in many men *libido quædam intellectûs*, a kind of ſpiritual luſt in our underſtanding, that is much pleaſed with ſuch high ſtrains, and contemplative Diſcourſes. B

3. Or thirdly, 'Tis like, St. *John*'s preaching cleared a great doubt and ſcruple in *Herod*'s mind concerning the Meſſias, that had much troubled him. We knew his Predeceſſour, the other *Herod*, when he heard of the birth of Chriſt, and that he was to be the King of the Jews, was much perplexed. He feared Chriſt came to be a temporal King, and ſo he and his poſterity ſhould loſe their Kingdom. But *John* preached Chriſt, *as the truth is in Jeſus*, that *Chriſt's Kingdom was not of this world*, he came to pardon ſins, to rule in the ſouls of men. *John* tells them that the Kingdom of Heaven was now approaching; aſſures them that Chriſtianity teaches obedience to worldly Powers and Potentates; doth not diſturb them, much leſs deſtroy them. And this Doctrine was welcom to *Herod*, *He heard it gladly*. C

4. Or fourthly, Was it not *John*'s ſeverity in preaching againſt the ſins of the time? *John* had his thunderings againſt the *Phariſees* and *Sadduces*, and the Prieſts, and Scribes, and Doctours of the Law; he was a ſharp reprover of vice and diſorders; he taught the Soldiers to be *content with their wages*, and not to mutiny. And *Herod* could hear other mens faults taxed and reproved, it was Muſick to him.

5. Or laſtly, Were they not ſome perſonal excellencies in *John*'s preaching that *Herod* delighted in, his wit, or elocution, or ſome graceful delivery? (as no doubt, *John* was a moſt accompliſhed Preacher) Theſe took *Herod*'s phanſie, and gained his attention. It was that which made the Jews liſten to *Ezekiel*'s preaching, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 32. *Lo, thou art to them*, ſaith God, *as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an Inſtrument*. *Ezekiel*'s eloquence was as Muſick to them. 'Twas the Tune they regarded more then the Ditty. Such were many of the *Corinthians*, ſome liked *Paul*'s way of preaching beſt, others were for *Peter*, others were taken with *Apollo* his eloquence. *They had the Faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in reſpect of perſons*. D E

The proof will be, that theſe or ſuch as theſe, were the Motives that made *Herod* delight in *John* Baptiſt's preaching. For, let *John* take the ſeventh Commandment for his Text, and preach againſt Inceſtuous Marriages, and ſo fall upon *Herod*'s great ſin which he lived and delighted in, then *Herod* flies off preſently. And now, like *Saul*, while *David* is playing on his Harp, and hath touched upon an harſh ſtring, he

A he flings his Javelin at him, and would nail him to the wall. Whereas true Piety will be of *Cornelius* his mind, *Act.* x. 33. *ready to hear every word of God that ſhall be ſpoken to us*; eſpecially that that concerns our ſelves; with *David* ſuffer *Nathan* to point him out, and to ſay to him, *Thou art the man*; entertain a reproof, as *Hezekias* did, when *Eſai* reprehended him for his vain-glory; *The word of the* LORD *is good. Let the righteous reprove me*, ſaith *David, it ſhall be as a precious ointment*, Pſal. cxli. 5.

Thirdly, The third thing conſiderable is *Herod*'s *conformity* to *John*'s preaching; he yielded to his Doctrine in many things, and ſubmitted
B to it. He was not a bare Auditor, gave *John* the hearing onely; but made ſome progreſs in practice too. *John*'s preaching prevailed with him, and made him do many things. Now, ſurely, a very ſpecious conformity, had it not ſome ſuſpicions and failings in it.

I. This Conformity is ſuſpicious; becauſe,

1. Theſe many things which *Herod* did, they were *facilia*, ſome light, eaſie performances. A carnal man can be very forward in ſome cheap obſervances; ſuch Duties as croſs not any ſtrong bent of his luſts; ye may prevail with him for the performance of them, and ſo for forbearance of ſome ſins not rooted in his nature, or grown ſtrong
C by cuſtom, nor bringing with them any forcible temptation: ſuch a Reformation you may bring an unregenerate man to. No doubt *Herod* forbore many an Oath, and abſtained from many vanities; but it coſt him no great ſtriving. He put himſelf to no great pain in this doing or forbearing. Canſt thou mortifie thy deareſt ſins, croſs thy luſts, and ſtrive againſt them? Work thy ſelf to the practice of thoſe good duties that are painful and laborious? ſuch a conformity argues truth of Grace in thee.

2. Theſe Many things which *Herod* did, 'tis like they were *plauſibilia*, ſome plauſible performances that the world will take notice of,
D and ſpeak well of; ſuch makes for *Herod*'s reputation in the world, and you may win him unto them. *Come ſee my Zeal*, ſaith *Jehu*, *which I have for the* LORD. Applauſe and commendation may draw us to the doing of ſome pious Duties. But trie *Herod* with the more inward, and private, and ſecret parts of Piety, that men cannot diſcern or take notice of; thy ſecret Devotion and Prayer to God, thy dayly bewailing thy ſins 'twixt God and thine own Conſcience, and the ſtrivings of thy ſoul againſt ſinful inclinations, thine alms in ſecret, as Chriſt directs: Oh! theſe make no noiſe, they are not matter of oſtentation, and ſo *Herod* forbears them.

E 3. Theſe Many things that *Herod* did, they might be *publica*, ſome civil, and publick, and outward Adminiſtrations; the redreſs of publick abuſes, ſome good orders publiſhed and enjoyned. No doubt many an honeſt cauſe ſped the better for *John*, the courſe of Juſtice went on more ſpeedily. Theſe good duties put *Herod* to no great trouble or pain. 'Tis more hard to mortifie one boſom-ſin that thy ſoul delights in, then to bring thy ſelf to the outward performance of the

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whole Law of God. And, as the Obedience of *Herod* was ſuſpicious, ſo we find it,

II. To be failing and defective. *He did many things:* but yet fell ſhort, he failed in other things; he diſpenſed with himſelf for ſome ſins which he would not part with. This he would do, but that he would not do. 'Twas like *Naaman*'s converſion; he promiſes ſome duties in Religion, but ſues for a diſpenſation in others. *Herein God be merciful to me:* this Sin I cannot part with. Whereas entire and univerſal obedience is onely acceptable, and of account with God. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect to all thy Commandements,* ſaith *David,* Pſal.cxix.6.

Satan knows this ſo well, that he can be content to have us yield to God in many things, onely be true to Satan in ſome one thing. He knows one dram of poyſon may ſpoil all the wholeſom ingredients, and make them deadly. One dead Flie may taint the moſt precious ointment, ſaith *Solomon:* One Sin, unrepented of, and retained in practice, the cheriſhing of one luſt will corrupt all other laudable and commendable duties. 'Tis ſaid of *Naaman* the *Syrian,* that he was a valiant and honourable man amongſt the people, but *he was a Leper.* So may it be ſaid of many a Profeſſour in Religion, he hath ſuch and ſuch excellencies; but he hath this ſore running on him, this ſpot of Leproſie that marrs the beauty of all his vertues.

And Divines give the reaſon of this Truth; *Quia bonum eſt ex integris cauſis, malum ex quolibet defectu.* Nothing is good but that which is entirely good, but a thing becoms naught upon any one defect. And this reaſon, 'tis warranted by St. *James.* Chap.ii.10. *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* And the Fathers expreſs this Truth by theſe ſimilitudes. "As a Bird, "ſaith *Chryſoſtom,* if the ſnare catch but one of her feet, though her "wings be free and ready for flight, yet ſhe is taken, and becomes a "prey to the Fowler. Or, as *Auguſtine* compares it, though all the "parts of our body be ſound, ſave onely one, that one diſeaſed and "ulcerous part may be deadly to thee. *Cur tot membra ſana non valent ad vitam, & unum morbidum valet ad mortem?* "All the ſound "members, ſaith he, cannot preſerve life; but even one diſeaſed mem-"ber ſhall haſten thy death. *Agrippa*'s *propemodùm,* his Almoſt, nay, *Herod*'s *admodùm,* his doing *many things,* all ſpilt and loſt by the retaining of one reigning ſin. A little Leven ſowrs and marrs the whole lump. *Take heed of the leven of Herod,* as Chriſt forewarns us, even in this ſenſe alſo. Ye may be, like him in the Goſpel, *not far from the Kingdom of God:* or like that young man in the Goſpel, *one thing is wanting to thee,* and yet come ſhort of Heaven. *Quod ferè fit, non fit;* that which is almoſt done, is as yet undone.

Ye ſee *Herod*'s unſufficiencies in all his progreſs; *Did many things,* but this would not paſs with St. *John* for ſound obedience. As Chriſt ſpake to the Church in the *Revelation, I have ſomewhat againſt thee:* ſo *John* Baptiſt ſpares not *Herod* in his beloved ſin.

1. See

A 1. See St. *John*'s fidelity. For all *Herod*'s forwardneſs, he will not abate him the Commiſſion of one groſs ſin. *John* is not like the unjuſt Steward that could gratifie his Maſters debtours, in ſtead of an hundred, bid them ſet down fifty, diſpenſe with him, and allow him the practice of one impiety. Thus St. *Paul* calls upon the *Corinthians* for entire obedience, 2 *Cor.* viii 7. *As ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us; ſee that you abound in this grace alſo.* St. *Paul* will not allow them the omiſſion of one Grace or holy Duty.

2. See St. *John*'s ſimplicity. A Politick man would have winked
B at this one fault of *Herod*, thought it wiſdom to preſerve his intereſt with *Herod*; I may prevail much with him, if I hold good terms with him; many good cauſes may ſpeed the better, if I hold fair with *Herod*; but to deal roughly with him, and affront him in his ſin, may ſet him farther off, no good ſhall be done with him. No, St. *John*'s Piety abhors this Policy. God allows no ſuch compliances upon any ſuch pretences. What ſaith God to *Ezekiel? Thou ſhalt ſpeak my word to them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; for they are rebellious.*

3. See St. *John*'s importunity in admoniſhing of *Herod*. He tells
C him plainly of his ſin. *Herod* would have him but to hold his peace, he deſires not *John* to juſtifie or maintain his Marriage with *Herodias*, or to ſolemnize, or countenance it, or to diſpenſe with it, as the Pope would have done, had it been in his dayes; onely let it alone, chuſe ſome other Text, preſs ſome other Duties, and all ſhall be well. No, St. *John* dares not forbear the reproof of this great ſin, but inveighs againſt it: *Si pereo, pereo. John* muſt do his duty, though it coſt him the loſs of *Herod*'s favour, I, and his life too. And ſo it did; and that will give you to ſee *Herod*'s deficiencie, to what he falls, even to open perſecution.

D So then from hence ye may obſerve theſe three Truths.

1. *Bare Formality, in matters of Religion, is not laſting.* It will wear off, like ſome wateriſh colours that are lightly laid on, will fade and vaniſh, are of no continuance. As we find this difference 'twixt Artificial and Natural Motions. That which moves naturally, moves continually; becauſe it comes from an inward principle as the motion and beating of the Pulſe: but Artificial Motions may hold for a time, but at laſt they will ceaſe; becauſe they are moved not from a principle within them, but from ſome outward cauſe. As the motion of a Clock, it moves and ſlacks as long as the Plum-
E met and weight is upon it; but take off the weight, and the Clock ſtands preſently: Such is Formality in Religion; By-reſpects are like ſo many Plummets, take them off, and Formality ceaſeth.

2. Obſerve, *One unmortified ſin wilfully retained, will eat out all appearances of Vertue and Piety.* *Herod*'s eſteem of *John* and his Miniſtry, and his forward performance of many good Duties, are all given over and laid aſide at the inſtance, and command of his ſin

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of Adultery. A reigning ſin will not endure the company and conſiſtencie of any thing that gives check, and ſtands in any ſeeming contrariety to it. *Judas* and *Demas*, and ſuch Saint-like Hypocrites will at laſt fling off their Masks and Vizors, and appear what they are, prophane worldlings. A Counterfeit Cripple, if it ſeems for his turn, will caſt away his Crutches and betake him to his legs.

3. *An unmortified ſin, rather then be croſſed, will fall to perſecution.* If *Herod* cannot enjoy his *Herodias* quietly, but *John* will ſtill be objecting it to him; both *Herod* and *Herodias* will eaſe themſelves of this Monitour, *John*'s head ſhall pay for it. Reigning ſins will at laſt prove raging ſins, and grow impatient of any reproof. Caſt Pearls and precious Truths before fierce Dogs, they will not onely trample them under their feet, but will rent and worry you, ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* vii. 6.

This is the dreadful downfal of unſoundneſs in Religion. A falſe friend to Religion will at laſt prove an open enemy to it. Should one have told *Herod* when he entertained *John* Baptiſt with ſo much curteſie; *Well, the time will come, when you will part with your new Chaplain, and fling him into Priſon, and take his head from him:* Sure *Herod* would have anſwered him as *Hazael* did *Eliſha*, *What? doſt thou think me a Dog to do ſo wickedly?* Should one have asked *Herod* and *Herodias* what they thought of *Ahab*'s and *Jezebel*'s perſecuting of *Elias?* No doubt, they would have cried ſhame of them, as of bloody Perſecutors. Here is another *Elias*; *John Baptiſt came in the Spirit and power of Elias*, and reproves *Herod* as the other did *Ahab*; and ſo *Herod* can impriſon *John* Baptiſt and take his head from him. 'Tis a good Obſervation that *Chryſoſtom* makes upon that place in St. *Matthew*, when the Jews ſaid, *Chap.* xxiii. 30. *If we had been in the dayes of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets.* "Mark, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, Doeſt thou hear men magnifying the old "Prophets and Primitive Divines? Obſerve how they ſtand affe-"cted to their preſent Miniſters. If they malign and perſecute "them, they would have perſecuted even thoſe former ſervants of "God whom they now magnifie. *Herod* would have been an *Ahab*, *Herodias* a *Jezebel*. That Speech of our Saviour to his Diſciples, *Joh.* xv. 20. *If they have perſecuted me, they will perſecute you alſo*, will admit an inverſion: We may ſay of ſuch men, *If they perſecute Chriſt's Diſciples and Servants, they would have perſecuted Chriſt himſelf alſo, had he lived in their Times.*

FOUR SERMONS ON II. COR. IV. 3, 4.

3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt:*
4. *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

THE uſual ſucceſs and entertainment, that the Goſpel found in St. *Paul's* Preaching, the ſcantling and proportion of it, himſelf ſets down, 1 *Cor.* xvi. 9. *A great door and effectual, is opened unto me, and there are many Adverſaries.* A door was opened, many advantages and opportunities God gave unto him for planting the Goſpel: but there were many Adverſaries. Satan, that dog'd him in the courſe of his Miniſtry, bred him many hindrances and impediments, ſtirred up Spirits of Contradiction to oppoſe and gain-ſay him. The experience of this various ſucceſs he found abundantly in preaching at *Corinth.* He prevailed much there, and converted many. God himſelf aſſured him of this ſucceſs, *Acts* xviii. 9. *Speak Paul, and hold not thy peace; for I have much People in this City.* And, as the Converſions he wrought there were many and effectual; ſo he wanted not for oppoſitions and contradictions. There were there that queſtioned his Apoſtleſhip, ſlighted his Abilities, pretended they found no ſuch evidence of Truth, nor excellency in his Goſpel, as he bare them in hand; which drew from St. *Paul* this ſecond Epiſtle, which he eſpecially intends as his own Apology, and Apology of the Goſpel. 'Tis a full account, which he gives of his Authority, Pains, Sincerity, and clear publication of the Goſpel. Of all which he had given ſo full a proof and demonſtration, that it could not be weakneſs and infirmity, but malice, and obſtinacy, that made them gain-ſay it. And therefore his *ſpirit is ſtirred within him*, and being armed with all Authority and

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and Severity, he threatens his Gain-ſayers with this heavy doom; bids them give over cenſuring of him, and look well to themſelves. He tells them their Unbelief, after ſo much Preaching, is a ſhrew'd ſign they belong not to God; but are meer caſt-aways. Such wilful refuſal, and oppoſing of God's Grace, 'tis a token of perdition, *Phil.* i. 28. *If our Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to them that are loſt.* A

The Text then, 'tis a ſad and an heavy Cenſure, that the Apoſtle paſſes upon non-proficiencie, the unprofitable living under the means of Grace. It ſets out the dangerous and deſperate condition of obſtinate Unbelievers; ſuch as under the clear Preaching of the Goſpel continue unconverted; with whom Chriſt, and his Goſpel finde no entertainment; they ſee nothing in it, why they ſhould embrace it, and ſubmit themſelves to the truth and power of it. B

And in it obſerve theſe three Particulars.

Firſt, Is the Non-proficiencie ſpecified and ſuppoſed; *If our Goſpel be hid.*

Secondly, Is the Cenſure and Judgment that is paſſed upon it; *It is hid to them that are loſt:* 'tis a ſign, they are caſt-away.

Thirdly, Is the true Cauſe of their non-proficiencie aſſigned.

Firſt, Is the Original and natural in-bred Cauſe in themſelves, that's Infidelity; a Voluntary Unbelief, that's the Cauſe that breeds it. C

Secondly, Is a cauſe that encreaſes this non-proficiencie of Unbelief, that is Spiritual Blindneſs inflicted and wrought into them; *Their minds are blinded.*

Thirdly, Is the Author and Worker of this Blindneſs, that's the Devil; *The God of this world.*

Fourthly, Is his End and purpoſe, why he blinds mens minds; *Leſt the Goſpel ſhould ſhine into them, and they ſhould be converted.*

And this aſſigning of theſe cauſes of their Unproficiencie removes other pretended and falſe-ſuppoſed cauſes of their Unbelief. They muſt be one of theſe three. D

I. They will ſay, God he conceals himſelf from them. No, 'tis the *God of this world*, not the true God. He propounds himſelf to be known in Chriſt as his lively Image.

II. They pretend, The Goſpel is dark and myſterious. No, that's full of light, of glorious light.

III. They ſay, The Apoſtle is obſcure in propounding it to them. No, it ſhines evidently to them in his Preaching, and would ſhine into them, would they but open their eyes, view and behold it. So; 'tis not God, not the Goſpel, not the Apoſtle, that cauſes this darkneſs of Unbelief in them. E

The firſt thing conſiderable is the pretended Obſcurity of the Goſpel, and ſo their Unproficiencie ſuppoſed; *If our Goſpel be hid.*

Here are three words, and ſo three things conſiderable.

Firſt, Is the ſpecial Truth, which St. *Paul* labours to free from obſcurity, and the unproficiencie, under which he thus heavily ſentences, that's the Goſpel.

Secondly,

A *Secondly*, Is the ſpecial Relation and Intereſt that St. *Paul* claims to this bleſſed Truth, he calls it *Our Goſpel.*

Thirdly, Is the Imputation that is charged upon this Truth, which he labours to remove, that's obſcurity; *If it be hidden.*

Firſt, *Paul* pleads for the Goſpel, cenſures them that are wilfully ignorant of it; tells them, 'tis a ſign of Perdition, not to take notice of the Truth and Glory of it; and he had juſt reaſon to do it.

I. The Goſpel, and the juſtifying of it was *ſummum officium*, it was the main ſcope and end of his Miniſtery. His employment was the
B publiſhing of the glad tidings of the Goſpel, the *Preaching of Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Act. xx. 21. His Function and Office was, *to teſtifie the Goſpel of the Grace of God*, Verſ. 24. *the making known the Goſpel of our Salvation*, Epheſ. i. 13. He magnifies this his Miniſtry and Apoſtleſhip, *Rom.* xi. 13. He accounts himſelf ſet in *apologiam Evangelii*, for the defence of the Goſpel, *Phil.* i. 17.

That's *Paul*'s Calling, that's ours. *We are Miniſters of the New-Teſtament*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. Here is the ſum and ſubſtance of what we preach, and what you ſhould believe, that *God is in Chriſt, reconciling himſelf, and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation.* We are
C therefore God's Embaſſadours, and *beſeech you to be reconciled unto God*, 2 Cor. v. 19. An Embaſſadour, in point of honour, muſt maintain his Commiſſion, avow the Truth and Authority of it. And our Ambaſſage, 'tis *the Word of Reconciliation, the tidings of the Goſpel*; 'tis the Sum of all our Preaching.

If *Paul* preaches the Law, he doth it ſtill in reference to the Goſpel.

1. To convince you of your great neceſſity to lay hold on the Goſpel, by ſhewing you the impoſſibility of performing the Law.

D 2. To enforce you to flie to the Sanctuary of the Goſpel, ſo to eſcape the curſe of the Law.

3. To direct you how to live under the Goſpel, by that rule of holineſs preſcribed in the Law. But yet all is for the advancing the Goſpel. *Moſes* and *Elias* muſt wait upon Chriſt on the Mount. Law and Prophets, all are ſubordinate and ſerviceable to the Goſpel.

II. *Paul* maintains the dignity of the Goſpel, threatens our unproficiency under it; becauſe the Goſpel it is *clariſſimum medium ſalutis*, the moſt clear, evident, convincing means of ſalvation. They might more excuſeably have charged obſcurity upon the Law of *Mo-*
E *ſes*; there was ſome darkneſs in that miniſtration. But the Goſpel is revealed in all evidence and manifeſtation. In it *the righteouſneſs of God is revealed from faith to faith*, Rom. i. 17. Clearer and clearer; in it the way to heaven is laid open. The Law 'tis like *Moſes* that had a *veil on his face* when he came from the Mount: the Goſpel like Chriſt on the Mount, his garments ſhine gloriouſly. There is a light in the Law; but the Goſpel, 'tis far more lightſom and reſplendent,

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dent. As in the Creation, God *made two great lights*, the Moon and the Sun; the leſs light to rule the night, the greater light to rule the day: ſo in the Church, God hath ſet up two great lights; the Law, that's like the light of the Moon; but we live under the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel. They are blinde that cannot ſee by Sun-ſhine. There may be dark ſpots in the Moon, there are none in the Sun. A

III. *Paul* is ſharp and ſevere againſt thoſe that are unproficient under the Goſpel; becauſe the Goſpel, tis *potentiſſimum organum ſalutis*, the moſt powerful and effectual means and inſtrument, to work our converſion. In reſpect of this, the Law was impotent and weak; *It made nothing perfect*, Heb. vii. 19. Like the light and beams of the Moon; *Lunæ radiis non matureſcit Botrus*: nothing grows or ripens by it. The Moon conveys no vital heat. But the Goſpel 'tis the moſt active and lively inſtrument of God. *Rom.* i. 16. *'Tis the power of God to ſalvation. Eſai* call it *the arm of the* LORD, *Eſa.* liii. 1. God accompanies the Word of the Goſpel with the efficacy of his Spirit. The Law adminiſtred no ſtrength; required all, but helped nothing: but the Goſpel, 'tis *the miniſtration of the Spirit*, St. *Paul* demands this of the *Galatians*, Chap. iii. 2. joyns with the falſe Apoſtles upon this iſſue; *This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?* When the Goſpel is preach'd, then the power of God is preſent to heal us. His Spirit then ſtrives with us, and puts forth it ſelf to work our converſion. When that is tendered to us, and we refuſe it; then God ſaith, *What can I do more then I have done to ſave you?* B C

Secondly, The ſecond thing Conſiderable is St. *Paul*'s claim and intereſt in the Goſpel; he calls it *Our Goſpel*. It may ſeem to be a title of diminution and diſparagement to denominate the Goſpel from any man; When men ſtrive for the name of the Goſpel, call it by the name of *John*, *The Grace of God*. What Chriſt ſaid of *John*'s Baptiſm, we may ſay of the Goſpel, *Is it from heaven, or from men?* No doubt, from heaven. And St. *Paul* elſewhere aſcribes it to an higher Author and owner; he calls it *the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Theſſ. iv. 8. So, and more then ſo, he gives it a more magnificent Title, 1 Tim. i. 11. *The glorious Goſpel of the bleſſed God*; *the Goſpel of the everlaſting God*, Rom. xvi. 26. 'Tis true; and yet *Paul* calls it here *Our Goſpel*; So 2 Theſſ. iii. 14. *He called you by our Goſpel*; and *Rom.* ii. 16. there he calls it *my Goſpel*. D

I. 'Tis *Paul*'s Goſpel, it was *fidei commiſſum*, it was committed to St. *Paul*'s Care and Truſt: and ſo this word, *Our Goſpel*, 'tis *vox fidelitatis*; he owns the Goſpel as his chief charge, that which he was mainly entruſted withal; Καλὴ παραθήκη: *that good thing which was committed to you, keep*, ſaith *Paul* to *Timothy*, 2 Tim. i. 14. He, 1 *Tim.* i. 11. calls it *the glorious Goſpel of the bleſſed God, which was committed to my truſt*. And how thankfully he took this truſt, the next Verſe ſhews: he bleſſes Chriſt for *counting him faithful, and putting him into the Miniſtery. Let a man ſo judg of us, as the Stewards of* E

God,

A *God*; think neither too high, nor too low of us; not owners, but yet ſtewards, 1 *Cor.* iv. 1. and 'tis required in ſtewards, that a man be found faithful. *Paul* is not the Teſtatour; but yet he is the Executour of the bequeathments of the Goſpel. He ſlights not this truſt, but owns it thankfully.

II. *Our Goſpel*, St. *Paul* counts the Goſpel, his Goſpel; 'tis *vox amoris*, 'tis a ſpeech and expreſſion of Love and Affection. *Amor appropriat*, 'tis the property of Love to appropriate what it loves, and to account it its own. 'Twas ſo with St. *Paul*: the Goſpel, 'twas his chief joy and love. All worldly things were vile to him in reſpect of that.

B Hear with what affection he ſpeaks of the Goſpel; *Neither count I my life dear unto my ſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my Miniſtery, which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtifie the Goſpel of the grace of God*, Acts xx. 24. He would do any thing, ſuffer any thing for the Goſpel's ſake.

III. *Our Goſpel*, 'tis *vox conteſtationis*, a ſpeech of Challenge and Conteſtation: he claims and challenges the Goſpel to himſelf, againſt all carping oppoſers, againſt all falſe Apoſtles. Such there were in the Church of *Corinth*, that deſpiſed *Paul*'s Preaching, boaſted of their learning and eloquence: Well, ſaith St. *Paul*, let them challenge what

C they will to themſelves, the Goſpel is ours, he will not yield that to them. Such falſe workers he met withal, *Gal.* ii. 5. *To whom he would not give place, no not for an hour, that the Truth of the Goſpel might continue with them. Periculoſum eſt in rebus Dei jure ſuo cedere*; he aſſumes this to himſelf, let them preach never ſo learnedly, or eloquently, and plauſibly, he is ſure he preached the truth of the Goſpel. In all contentions, let's keep this hold. Let Hereticks and Papiſts, and Schiſmaticks, carryed away in their popular inſinuations, challenge all other excellencies of Wit, Learning, Eloquence: but be ſure thou yield not the honour of Truth to them; the Goſpel is ours.

D IV. *Our Goſpel*, 'tis *vox certitudinis*, 'tis a ſpeech of Confidence and full Aſſurance. *Paul* is aſſured the thing that he preached unto them, was the truth of the Goſpel. *Paul*'s Preaching, and Chriſt's Goſpel were *termini convertibiles*, they were all one. He might ſafely ſay, that they that rejected his Doctrine, oppoſed the Goſpel, and would prove caſt-awayes.

1. His preaching was infallible, he was guided by an unerring Spirit. He is confident of this, that if an *Angel from Heaven* ſhould contradict him, he pronounces a curſe on him. There was no chaff nor hay, nor ſtubble, that he built upon the foundation; but all rich pre-

E cious Truth. See with what aſſurance he ſeals up his Doctrine, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 14. *If any man be a Prophet, or ſpiritual, let him acknowledge the things, that I write, to be the Commandments of the* LORD. He preached nothing but the Oracles of God.

2. His Preaching was with all evidence, he concealed nothing: but acquainted the Churches *with the whole counſel of God*. He *warned every man, perſwaded every man*; and this he did with all evidence

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and *demonſtration of the ſpirit*. He put not on a *veil over his face*, as *Moſes* did, 2 *Cor*. iii. 13. His preaching was ſo clear and evident, that he tells the *Galathians*, that *Chriſt was evidently ſet forth before their eyes, and crucified amongſt them*. They could not ſay of him, as the people did of *Ezekiel*; *Ah! Lord God, they ſay of me, Doth not he ſpeak Parables?* Chap. xx. 49. A

3. His Preaching was ratified with the greateſt confirmation;

1. Of open Sanctity. His Life gave teſtimony to his Doctrine; he lived the Goſpel, as well as he preached it.

2. Of inward Sincerity. He had no ſiniſter fetches to gain upon them, to preach Chriſt into their hearts, and himſelf into their purſes. It had the confirmation, B

3. Of Miracles. The *ſigns of an Apoſtle were wrought amongſt them in ſigns and wonders, and mighty deeds*, 2 Cor. xii. 12. and gave teſtimony to St. *Paul*'s preaching.

4. That which he eſteemed above Miracles, he had ſuffered perſecutions for this Truth; *born the marks of the Lord Jeſus in his body*, which none of theſe carping falſe Apoſtles would do. They were all for ſelf-preſervation; *Paul* for ſelf-denyal. He was a willing and joyful partaker of the afflictions of the Goſpel.

4. *Paul*'s Preaching was moſt ſucceſsful. This he calls the *ſeal of his Miniſtery*. *The grace of God* wrought wonderfully by him. He wrought mighty converſions, gained more to Chriſt, then all the Apoſtles, trampled down Satan, havocked his Kingdom, converted Idolaters, Theives, Murderers, Sodomites; and that in *Corinth*. Who converted the *Corinthians*, but *Paul*? Who, but he, turned them from Idols to the living God? Certainly, they that cannot be wrought upon by ſuch a Goſpel, ſo preached, ſo confirmed, ſo effectual of ſuch Converſions, have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect themſelves, and fear they are not ſuch as belong to God: Otherwiſe *Paul*'s preaching, ſo infallible, ſo evident, ſo confirmed in others, ſo powerful and effectual, would have prevailed with them. C D

Thirdly, The third thing Conſiderable is the Imputation, which is caſt upon the Goſpel, that it is hid and obſcure; and the Apoſtle ſeems in ſome part to grant it, there is ſome obſcurity and darkneſs in it.

The Enquiry then muſt be, how far forth it is ſo, and to whom it is ſo? Take it in theſe following Aſſertions.

I. 'Tis true, the Goſpel in it ſelf, in its own nature, is an hidden, a ſecret, cloſe reſerved thing. 'Tis the Myſtery of God, locked up in his ſecret counſel, naturally unknown to men, or Angels. The Moral Law, 'tis evident by Nature, written in mens hearts; but the Goſpel is a meer Novelty to Nature. 'Tis *a Myſterie kept ſecret ſince the world began*, Rom. xvi. 26. *a Myſterie in former ages, not made known to the Sons of men*, Epheſ. iii. 5. *a Myſterie which hath been hid from ages, and generations*, Coloſ. i. 26. *a Myſterie which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God*, Epheſ. iii. 9. So 'tis naturally unknown to us. E

II. Even

A II. Even after God had publiſhed it by his Son, yet ſtill it is an hidden, obſcure thing to every natural man. The natural man perceives not the Myſteries of the Goſpel, he cannot diſcern them; they are above and beyond his reach and capacity. The Soul muſt have a new ſpiritual light put into it, to be able to ſee the Truth of the Goſpel, *Fleſh and blood cannot reveal it*, Matth. xvi. 17. *No man can ſay, Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Cor. xii. 3. Men may be a Law to themſelves, but not a Goſpel to themſelves. Nature can ſee the light of the Moral Law; but not the Myſteries of the Goſpel. *The Natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, they ſeem fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. *We ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a Myſterie.* Let it ſhine never ſo clearly, our natural blindneſs cannot perceive it. *The light ſhined in the darkneſs, but the darkneſs comprehended it not*, Joh. i. 5.

III. The Goſpel in ſome meaſure and degree is hid, and obſcure, even to the Saints of God. Take it in three degrees.

1. The Goſpel hath in it ſome depths and ſecrets, which no Saint of God may throughly ſearch into. They are called *the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 10. *the unſearchable riches of Chriſt*, Epheſ. iii. 8. St. *Paul*, that great Diver, ſtood amazed at them, paſſes over diſputation, falls to admiration; cryed out, *Oh! the depth of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God, how unſearchable are his judgments, his wayes are paſt finding out!* Rom. xi. 33. The Myſterie of the Trinity, of the Incarnation of Chriſt, of God's Election, the works of God's grace, the Myſterie of glory, all theſe to be adored by Faith; but not comprehended.

2. The Goſpel hath ſome obſcurity in it, even as the Scripture propounds it, and reveals it to us. Indeed the moſt vital and neceſſary Truths are plainly expreſſed. *The entrance into thy Word gives light, even to the ſimple*, ſaith *David*. But yet the Scripture is ſo framed, that even in the Goſpel, that lightſome Body, there are ſome obſcurities, *ſome things hard to be underſtood*, 2 Pet. iii. 16. Some depths in Scripture beyond the largeſt capacity.

3. There is in the knowledg of God's Saints, much obſcurity and imperfection.

1. The manner of their knowledg, 'tis by Faith; and that's a grace that is joyned with obſcurity. Faith takes up Truth upon truſt, hath not an evident comprehenſion of it. 'Tis but the knowledg of a child, not of a grown man. We ſee but the back part of Chriſt here; we do not yet behold him *face to face*.

E 2. There is ſome culpable ignorance and darkneſs in the Saints of God; they know not ſo much of the Goſpel as they ſhould know, and might know. Chriſt charges his Diſciples with this fault, *Luk.* xxiv. 25. *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe that the Prophets have written!* St. *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that they were but *Babes in knowledg*, 1 Cor. iii. 1. *children of underſtanding, unskilful in the word of righteouſneſs*, Heb. v. 13.

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Serman I.

Sheep, Pſal. cxix. 176. Thus our Saviour tells us what was the condition of us all; *The Son of man came to ſave, and ſeek that which was loſt*, Matth. xviii. 11. He *was ſent to the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of Iſrael.* Every wicked man loſes and undoes himſelf. A

III. There is yet a farther loſs, that's a loſs of Sentence and Judgment; when a Sinner is caſt in Law, when Sentence of Condemnation is paſt upon him, he hath incurred that heavy curſe, which God's Law threatens againſt offenders. This is every wicked man's condition; God's Law, that caſts him, the curſe of it purſues him; by virtue of that Sentence we are all undone, and loſt; all of us are *civiliter mortui*, dead, and caſt, and loſt men in Law. That ſhuts up all men in Condemnation. B

Theſe three,

I. The loſs of natural corruption.

II. The loſs of ſinful Tranſgreſſion.

III. The loſs of legal Malediction: No man is free from them; ſo all are loſt.

True, but the Goſpel comes to recover us out of theſe loſſes; *There is hope in Iſrael*, as concerning this loſs. *Chriſt came to ſeek and ſave that which was* thus *loſt*. There is hope to be recovered out of theſe loſſes, and fetched back again. Many have been ſo, many ſhall be ſo. But this loſs, which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, 'tis the diſmal, final, irrecoverable loſs, beyond all redemption. C

It implies three things.

1. A loſs *in decreto*. They that will not obey the Goſpel, are loſt in God's account and eſtimation, nay, more then ſo, they are loſt in his purpoſe and reſolution. He hath paſſed upon ſuch a decree of perdition. And what ſaith *Job? If he cuts off, or ſhuts out, who can hinder him?* He finds them loſt, and ſo he leaves them, reſolves to paſs by them, not to recover them; he ſets the brand of his hatred upon them. Such the Scripture calls *Reprobates, Caſt-aways, Veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction, Sons of Perdition.* They are προγεγραμμένοι, bill'd and book'd up for deſtruction. They, to whom the Goſpel doth no good, that will not embrace it, are thus loſt, appointed to Perdition. D

2. There is a Loſs *in ſtatu*. Such as refuſe the Goſpel, they are in an actual ſtate of Perdition. *John Baptiſt* deſcribes their woful ſtate and condition: *The wrath of God abides upon them*, Joh. iii. 36. They that will not lay hold on the offers of Grace; ſuch, are ſtray'd and loſt beyond recovery. Thoſe whom the Goſpel cannot find and recover, ye may give them for loſt, they are undone for ever. *The loſt Groat*, the Goſpel can finde; *the loſt ſheep*, the Goſpel can bring back again; *the loſt Son*, the Goſpel can entertain again: but thoſe that repel theſe benefits of the Goſpel, there is no hope of them. E

3. There is a loſs *in eventu*. Were it but the loſs of Heaven, without any other miſery, 'twere an heavy doom, as *Auguſtine* diſcourſes. "Should God ſay, Thou ſhalt eſcape all plagues and puniſhments "here, and hereafter, *tantùm faci[illegible]m non videbis*, it would be an "heavy

A "heavy damnation. But theſe are ſo loſt, as they are, and ſhall be deſtroyed. Ἀπόλλυμαι is not barely to be loſt and gone; but to be undone and deſtroyed. The ſtray Sheep was loſt, but not worried, and devoured; but this loſs is a loſs of deſtruction, they are utterly ruined, miſerably undone. As *Jacob* conceived of *Joſeph*, he had not only loſt him, but reckons of him as deſtroyed. *A cruel beaſt hath devoured him, Joſeph is dead, torn in pieces.* Such is the loſs of unbelievers: thoſe whom the Goſpel recovers not, come not only ſhort of Heaven, but fall unavoidably into the jaws of Hell; utter deſolation and vengeance ſhall be poured upon them. *Such are veſſels of*
B *wrath prepared for deſtruction.* Think not, nor imagine to thy ſelf a tolerable condition, though thou miſs of Heaven. *Regnare nolo, ſufficit mihi ſalvum eſſe*, Aug. Though I miſs of Heaven, I hope to do well enough, though in a meaner condition. No, if the Goſpel do not convert thee, it will confound thee; it will be either thy bliſs, or thy bane; it will either help thee to Heaven, or ſink thee to the pit and bottom of Hell.

We have ſeen the Doom and Cenſure which the Apoſtle paſſes upon Unbelievers; Now let's take notice of,

Secondly, The manner of Denouncing of it; *If our Goſpel be hid,*
C *'tis hid to them that are loſt.*

And for the manner of Denouncing this ſentence, take notice of three qualifications in it.

I. This form of Denouncing of it is hypothetical, by way of ſuppoſal only, if there be any ſuch. And this form and manner of expreſſion carries with it a ſecret exprobration and upbraiding of the ſin of Infidelity. As if he ſhould ſay, *'Tis ſtrange and wonderful, that after ſo much preaching, there ſhould any remain ignorant, unteachable, unconverted; 'tis almoſt incredible men ſhould neglect ſo great ſalvation.* Had any other myſterie been taught them, of leſs advantage
D then this myſterie of the Goſpel, would they have continued ignorant of it? Nay, how attentive, how apprehenſive, how ſtudious, how proficient and forward would they have been to have learn'd and practiſed it? and ſhall the Goſpel, the myſterie of ſalvation, be the only neglected thing? It made our Saviour wonder at it, when he preached at *Nazareth*, and ſaw ſo little good done, *He marvelled at their unbelief*, Mark. vi. 6.

II. This form of Denunciation, 'tis illative, brought in by way of proof and inference. 'Tis not an immediate Principle, clear in it ſelf; but he expreſſes it by way of illation and deduction. *If our*
E *Goſpel be hid, 'tis hid to them that be loſt.* If men continue ignorant and diſobedient to the Goſpel, if impenitent and unbelievers, then the Apoſtle from thence infers this concluſion, Such men are Caſt-aways. 'Tis not in the nature of an immediate abſolute Prediction, but by the way of menacing and commination, and upon preſuppoſal of their unbelief.

This is the tenour of the Goſpel; this is the Sum of our Commiſſion.

We

Sermon I.

We cannot give out copies of God's Decrees, give men an immediate assurance of Heaven; or seal up unto them their final perdition: but we must proceed by a just inference from those qualifications and conditions, which the Gospel expresses. We search not the Records of Heaven, but the Books of the Scriptures. And that bids us say to the righteous, *It shall go well with thee*: and to say, *Wo to the wicked, It shall be ill with thee*, Esai. iii. 10. That gives us warrant to assure you, if you repent, and believe, and live holily, you are elected, and shall be saved: If you persist in ignorance and impiety, and will not lay hold on Christ and his Gospel, you are lost and Cast-awayes. We preach not God's secret counsels, which are absolute: but the promises and threatnings of the Gospel, which are conditional. A B

III. This form of Sentence, 'tis suspensive and general; *If it be hid, 't is hid to them that are lost.* This Thunderbolt hovers over their heads in a dismal cloud of generality. The Apostles fastens it upon no man's person in particular. St. *Paul*, no doubt, had the Spirit of discerning incorrigible sinners; but forbears to discover them. He points not out, who are lost, cast-awayes, reprobates; to teach us, not to pass peremptory sentence concerning any man's reprobation, or perdition. As far as threatnings reach, so we may, and must affright men; but we have no warrant, to say, *Thou art a reprobate.* We must warn every man, and tell them of their dangers; but not absolutely conclude, they are destined to destruction. *Nobis commisit congregationem, sibi reservavit separationem.* He must separate the Goats from the Sheep, that cannot mistake them. Nay, we are allowed to bring home the mercies and promises of God, more near and close then we are his judgments, *Deut.* xxvii. 12, 13. *They shall stand upon Mount Gerazim to bless the People, and they shall stand upon Mount Ebal to curse.* 'Tis not said to curse the people. Applications of Blessings may be more particular and personal, then denouncing of Curses. St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xvi. sends personal Salutations and Benedictions to the Saints; *Salute Aquila, and Priscilla, and the Church in their house:* but when he is on Mount *Ebal*, he denounces Curses in general, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* That curse breaks in the air; he fastens it not upon any one's person. C D

And so from this Sentence thus denounced, the Observation is thus much; *That Ignorance of the Gospel, and Unproficiencie under the Ministery of it, 'tis a fearful sign of a Cast-away, a token of Perdition.* Such an one had need look to himself, lest he prove a Reprobate.

See the truth of this in three Particulars; in respect E

1. Of the Want of the Gospel.
2. Of the Neglect of the Gospel.
3. Of the Rejection of the Gospel. These leave them in a condition of damnation.

1. Single Ignorance (which is *carentia remedii*) of Christ's Gospel, is damnable. Such a man lies in the state of damnation. Not only the neglecting

A neglecting, but even the wanting of the means of Salvation expoſes us to Perdition. As a man that's ſick of a deadly Diſeaſe, not only the refuſal of the ſovereign Medicine to cure him; but the bare want of it makes him irrecoverable. Ignorance, 'tis the hold of Satan, where he keeps his Captives in Chains of Darkneſs. 'Tis the ſhadow of death; the very Border, and Suburbs, and in-let into Hell. Thus *Paul* deſcribes the ſad eſtate of men, ignorant of Chriſt, *Epheſ.* iv. 18. *having their underſtandings darkened, and ſtrangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them.*

See this by the contrary; Saving knowledg, 'tis a ſign of God's love,
B that he means well to us: *God would have all men ſaved, and come to the knowledg of the Truth,* 1 Tim. ii. 4. 'Tis a ſign of his ſpecial love in Election: *To you it is given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven,* aliis non, *Matth.* xiii. 11. This Knowledg 'tis the firſt ſtep towards Heaven; *By this knowledg ſhall my righteous Servant juſtifie many,* Eſai. liii. 11. 'Tis a ſign we belong to God; *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed,* Act. iii. 48. *My ſheep hear my voyce,* Joh. x. 16. *You therefore hear not, becauſe you are not of God.* Would'ſt thou get an hopeful ſign to thy ſelf, that thou belongeſt to God? Get this token, *The God of our fathers hath choſen thee, that thou ſhould'ſt*
C *know his will.* And on the contrary, the Prophet *Eſay*'s ſpeech is of ſad abode, *They are a people of no underſtanding, therefore he that made them, ſhall have no mercy on them,* Eſai. xxvii. 11.

2. A ſecond Point is, *Wilful, and careleſs, and ſupine Ignorance* (which is *neglectus remedii*) *when the Goſpel is offered and tendered to us, that's worſe.* The other left them; this puts them in a damnable eſtate. Such an one is in a dangerous condition; his end is ſuſpicious, he hath a ſhrewd ſign upon him of perdition. When God continues calling, and ſtill we turn the deaf ear to him; when we are willingly and wilfully ignorant, Chriſt makes that a fearful ſign of a Reprobate.
D *Therefore ye hear not, becauſe ye are not of God,* Joh. viii. 47. The hearing ear, that which is ſwift to hear, 'tis a good ſign of Grace. But, when thine ear is heavy, like the *deaf Adder, that will not hear the Charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely*; ſuch a man is too too likely to prove a Caſt-away.

3. A third Point is, *Obſtinate, reſolved, and final Ignorance* (which is *rejectio remedii*) *and contempt of the Goſpel, 'tis an infallible mark, an evident token of perdition, a certain fore-runner of damnation.* When we live out the patience of God, when men come to that deadly period of Infidelity, after all means uſed, then God's Spirit will no
E more ſtrive nor wreſtle with us, wait no longer upon the hardneſs of our hearts. *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, and have hated the knowledge of God; therefore I will laugh at your deſtruction.* See how St. *Paul* gives over ſuch hopeleſs wretches, *Acts* xiii. 46. When the *Jews* grew obſtinate, what ſaith St. *Paul? Seeing you put the Word of God from you, and judg your ſelves unworthy of eternal life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles*; he leaves them to die and periſh in their ſins.

Sermon I.

We may invert the Apoſtle's Speech, 1 *Cor.* i. 18. *The preaching of the croſs is to them that periſh, fooliſhneſs*; and ſay, *They to whom it is fooliſhneſs, ſhall periſh.* The *Natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him.* He receives them not, not becauſe he accounts them too high and ſublime for him; but he rejects them out of ſcorn, as things below him, counts them fooliſhneſs. 'Tis not, as *Solomon* ſaith, *Wiſdom is too high for a fool*, and therefore he refuſes it; but wiſdom is with him, and the Goſpel is fooliſhneſs, and ſo he deſpiſes it. Talk to an unlearned man of ſome points of Philoſophie, he will ſay, he cannot receive them, they are beyond his capacity: but here, talk of Chriſt and the Goſpel, they reject it, becauſe 'tis fooliſhneſs, too low for them. Here is the contumely, which Infidelity offers to the Goſpel; not only refuſes it, but contemns it.

A

B

C

D

THE

E

THE SECOND SERMON ON II. Cor. iv. 3, 4.

In whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, leſt the light ——

WE proceed,

Thirdly, To the Cauſes of this their Unproficiency. Indeed, the Text diſcovers to us a concurrence of all the cauſes of a Sinner's Perdition. Here is not *aurea*, but *ferrea Catena*, the ſeveral links of that Iron Chain, that lets down a Sinner into the bottomleſs pit: the ſeveral ſteps, and ſtairs, by which he deſcends into the place of torment.

Firſt, God findes him loſt in ſin, and ſo he leaves him; he ſees him involved in the maſs of Perdition, and reſolves to paſs by him, not to recover him.

Secondly, A ſecond ſtep is voluntary Infidelity, a wilful neglect and contempt of the Goſpel and means of ſalvation.

Thirdly, A third is a thraldom to Satan. Wilful unbelief gives Satan poſſeſſion of him, and power over him.

Fourthly, A fourth ſtep that's *Blindneſs of minde*. They would not believe, and therefore they ſhall not believe: Satan bores out their eyes, caſts them into a ſpiritual Lethargie, and an utter incapacity; and that brings them to a final, and deſperate, and irrecoverable condition, *The Goſpel ſhall not ſhine into them, that they may be ſaved.*

It remains now, that we ſpeak,

Firſt, Of the natural, inbred cauſe of this Unproficiency, that's *Unbelief*. 'Tis that which makes all means of Grace unprofitable. An unbelieving heart is unteachable, it fruſtrates all offers of Grace, and makes them unſucceſsful. This is the reaſon, why the Goſpel could do no good upon the Jews: *Heb.* iv. 2. *The word preached did not profit them, not being mingled with faith in them that heard it.* He compares

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the Goſpel to ſome ſovereign Medicine, which muſt not be taken down alone; but tempered and mixed with ſome liquor that may carry it down, and ſhed it abroad into every part: ſo Faith, it hath *vim diaphoreticam*, 'tis *vehiculum verbi*. We muſt mix the word with faith; that will quicken and convey it into every part of the Soul, make it powerful and effectual. Infidelity that makes it unprofitable; nay of a ſovereign Medicine, it turns it into a deadly poyſon. Therefore St. *Paul* calls the Goſpel the *word of faith*, Rom. x.8. 'Tis a word that Faith only makes uſe of.

This Sin of Infidelity makes a ſtop of our Converſion at the very beginning, deſtroys the firſt conceptions of Grace. An unbelieving heart, 'tis like ſome ill-conditioned, cold, barren ground, that chils and deads the ſeed, as ſoon as it is ſown, it makes it rot in the furrows, never to ſpring up, or come to maturity.

'Tis a ſin to be ſtriven againſt, becauſe 'tis exceeding natural, exceeding hard to be removed and cured, exceeding dangerous and pernicious; like ſome noyſome Weed, no good thing can grow where it ſpreads and proſpers.

I. 'Tis a ſin exceeding natural. 'Twas that ſin that gave us the firſt ſlip in our firſt fall, when we all fell from God in *Adam*. While by faith he held hold on God, and ſtuck to his word, he was out of danger, he was impregnable; but when Satan made him let go that hold, and by Infidelity to call God's Word in queſtion, then he wrought his fall and ruin preſently. And it being the firſt, it became the moſt natural ſin. The Devil hath a *Probatum eſt* ſet upon that temptation. We are ſo prone to unbelief, that we had rather liſten to Satan diſſwading, then to God himſelf perſwading of us to believe the Goſpel. "No marvel, ſaith *Auguſtine*, men look not up to theſe heavenly Truths, *quia in terrena proni, dorſum eorum ſemper incurvum eſt*: their backs and necks are bowed downwards, they cannot look upwards and behold the Goſpel.

And this native ill-quality of Unbelief ſhews it ſelf ſpecially in refuſing the Goſpel. Infidelity is never ſo perverſe and obſtinate, as againſt Chriſt and his Goſpel; we will ſooner believe any thing then that. Three reaſons of it.

1. *Rerum altitudo.* The Goſpel propounds very high, ſublime Myſteries, Truths that are exceeding ſpiritual and divine. The Myſterie of godlineſs in the Goſpel, 'tis the moſt refined wiſdom of all Truths. Now the Soul of man by Infidelity is ſo bowed down, that it meaſures all Truths by ſenſe, or at moſt, by reaſon. It will not believe God further then it ſees him. But the Goſpel delivers Truths that Reaſon cannot reach to; *Depths of Wiſdom: We ſpeak the Wiſdom of God in a myſterie*, 1 Cor. ii. 7. The loweſt and firſt Rudiments of Chriſtianity are inconceiveable to fleſh and blood; how much more the more high and ſublime? See this in Chriſt's Diſpute with *Nicodemus*, John iii.

A (1.) *Nicodemus* was no obſtinate, perverſe man; he was content to hear and learn.

(2.) He was no meer Infidel or Pagan; he had been long in the Uſher's Form, under the Pædagogie of the Law.

(3.) He was no Smatterer or Novice in it; but a great Proficient, *a Maſter in Iſrael.*

(4.) The Doctrin Chriſt inſtructs him in, was one of the firſt Principles and Rudiments in Chriſtianity, the Doctrin of Regeneration. And yet how dull and unapprehenſive was he? *How can theſe things be?* How groſly did he conceive of theſe Myſteries? If he be ſo un-
B capable of theſe lower and eaſier Truths, how can the deeper Myſteries of Religion go down with him? *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not; how ſhall you believe, if I tell you of heavenly?* Joh. iii. 12. Infidelity refuſes the Goſpel upon a ſecond pretence; that's

2. *Mediorum improbabilitas.* The means of Salvation, which the Goſpel propounds, ſeem to an Unbeliever exceeding unlikely and improbable, and ſo he refuſeth them. Here is the perverſneſs of Infidelity; ſome things are too high in the Goſpel, he cannot reach to them: again, ſome things ſeem too mean and low, he cannot ſtoop to them.
C That God ſhould be Incarnate and become a poor man, Infidelity laughs at it: *Citiùs apud illos* Jupiter *Taurus, quàm Deus homo*, Tertul. That our Saviour ſhould be crucified, and by ſuch a death ſave us, it cannot ſink into him. *We preach Chriſt crucified, to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, to the Gentiles fooliſhneſs*: The one ſtumbles at it, the other ſpurns at it: The one makes it a ſtumbling-block, the other a mocking-ſtock. The meanneſs of Chriſt's Perſon, 'tis a great quarrel and offence to Infidelity. His own Countrey-men ſlighted him: *They were offended at him*, Matth. xiii. 57. *How can this man ſave us?* they ſet him at naught. So all the means of Grace Infidelity judges them poor
D and contemptible. The Preaching of the Word, 'tis but fooliſhneſs to them. Many a man that gives us the hearing, I fear, laughs in his ſleeve at us. The Sacraments, how unlikely to be *infundibula gratiæ*, conveyances of Grace to us? A ſprinkling of water to cleanſe the ſoul; a taſte of Bread and Wine, to nouriſh us to life eternal. *Naaman* the *Syrian*, is the Pattern of Infidelity, he ſcorns God's way, and can tell a better of his own: I had thought thus and thus, what means *dipping ſeven times in Jordan? Are not the Rivers of Damaſcus as healthful and ſovereign?* There is another Reaſon that makes us thus backward to believe the Goſpel, and that is,

E 3. *Conſcientiæ reatus.* The heart of every man by nature is full of privy guiltineſs, conſcious to himſelf, that all is not well 'twixt God and him; and that makes his heart draw back by unbelief, and not embrace the Goſpel. This guiltineſs of Conſcience that God is become our enemy, that heaven and we are at variance, makes a man ſtart and be ſhie at any appearances of God, at any meſſage or tidings from him. As an indebted man or malefactor, is afraid at the ſight of an Officer,

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Officer, he thinks he comes to apprehend him: as *Ahab* was troubled at the ſight of a Prophet, *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* It makes a wicked man tremble at any tidings from God. He looks upon Chriſt as the Devil did, *O! art thou come to torment us?* Doth God ſpeak to him? require any duty of him? he ſays, as *Ahab* did, *See how he picks a quarrel againſt me*, 2 King. v. 7. He looks upon the Scripture, nay the Goſpel, (the Patent of Mercy and Pardon, an Act of Oblivion and Indempnity) as a Writ to arreſt him, as the very Neck verſe of his Condemnation. Tell him, that God is willing to treat with him of Reconciliation; yea, that he hath given his Son to die for him, it cannot ſink into his heart to believe it, 'tis too good News to be true. His guilty heart miſ-gives him; *God is mine enemy, he cannot mean ſo well to me*: it makes him refuſe to come in. As Traytours and Rebels that reject Pardon; they will fight it out, they look for no mercy. That's the firſt, Infidelity is a ſin exceeding natural. A B

II. 'Tis a ſin exceeding difficult and hard to be cured. There is no ſin more inexpugnable, then the ſin of Infidelity.

1. The long continuance in our Nature makes it hardly curable: like a Tree deeply rooted, 'tis hardly digged up. The poſſeſſed of a Devil, that had been ſo of a childe, was hardly cured, *Mark* ix. 21. the Diſciples could not do it, *This kind goes not out, but by Prayer and Faſting*. Infidelity, 'tis a tough corruption, 'tis a ſturdy Devil. C

2. Infidelity is hardly cured; 'tis a Diſeaſe of the Underſtanding and rational Soul. *Infidelitas eſt affectus in ipſa voluntatis & rationis arce ſedens, & regnans*, Luth. And rational Diſeaſes are moſt incureable. 'Tis a difficult work to take off a Film from the Eye. And unbelief, 'tis a Film upon the Underſtanding. Unbelief, 'tis hardly removed, becauſe it ſeems to be reaſonable. Thoſe ſins that Reaſon condemns, as Intemperance and Senſuality, Reaſon helps forward the cure of them; as Reaſon helps the cure of ſome Diſeaſes: But Reaſon pleads for Infidelity. Nature helps not this cure, but ſtrives againſt it. What? will you put out our eyes? bid us believe we know not what? make us go further then Reaſon teaches us? See the difficulty of this cure in theſe Diſcoveries. D

1. Chriſt himſelf, by his own Preaching, could hardly maſter this bind and deaf Devil. Though *he ſpake as never man ſpake*, yet how few believed him? Not any of the great Ones ſubmitted to him: nay, they gloryed in it, *Do any of the Rulers believe on him?* Joh. vii. 48. No, not his own Countrey or Kinsfolk: *His Brethren believed not in him*, Joh. vii. 5.

2. Infidelity rejected not only his bare Preaching; but it did out-face the very evidence and power of Miracles. 'Tis a ſin not to believe even without Miracles. Chriſt reproves it, *Joh.* iv. But Infidelity will not yield, when it ſees Miracles. How many Miracles did Chriſt caſt away upon the Infidelity of the *Jews*? Thus God expoſtulates with the *Iſraelites*, Numb. xiv. 11. *How long will it be e're they believe me, for all the ſigns that I have ſhewed amongſt them?* E

A *them?* Nay, the Jews Infidelity grew more obſtinate by our Saviours Miracles; it ſtiffned it ſelf harder, kicked againſt the evidence and glory of them.

3. See the hardneſs of this cure of Infidelity, how weakly it goes forward in God's own Children, how ſlowly, how imperfectly? What ado was it to get *Moſes* to believe at God's appearance to him? How did *Moſes* and *Aaron* ſtagger thorow Unbelief? What a ſtruggling of Uubelief in *Sarah* and *Zacharie?* How often were the Diſciples checked for their Unbelief? *O ye of little faith!* And when they had believed, yet how ſoon were they relapſed and
B fallen back from it? *Martha*, after much ado, ſhe believed: but, when Chriſt bids them open the Sepulchre, ſhe relapſes preſently, ſhe falls into a new fit of Infidelity, *O, now he ſtinketh!* What ſaith Chriſt to her? *Did I not ſay, if thou wouldeſt believe?* Joh. xi. 40. So the Diſciples, after they had ſeen the Miracle of the Loaves; yet 'tis ſaid, *They forgat that Miracle, for their hearts were hardned*, *Mark* vi. 52. What a ſwoon did the Faith of the Apoſtles fall into upon Chriſt's Paſſion? *Chriſt upbraided them for their unbelief*, *Mark* xvi. 14. 'Tis hardly cured.

III. Infidelity, 'tis a ſin exceeding dangerous and pernicious, of
C great provocation.

1. 'Tis very dangerous. 'Tis ſeated in the moſt vital part, in the mind and underſtanding: And a wound in the head, 'tis much more dangerous, then in ſome other Members. Infidelity, 'tis *error circa Principia*: An Unbeliever errs in the firſt Principles, and ſo errs more perniciouſly; as he that miſtakes and goes wrong at firſt ſetting out, and takes a wrong way, he errs more then he that miſtakes afterwards, he goes not one ſtep right. Belief ſets us into the way to Heaven; but unbelief puts us the quite contrary way, carries us to *Tarſus*, when God ſends us to *Nineveh*. He that believes not, treads the firſt
D ſtep wrong. Faith, 'tis the firſt beginning of a Chriſtian life: *He that comes to God, muſt believe*, Heb. xi. 6. But Infidelity that ſets us off: *Take heed there be not in you an heart of unbelief, to depart from the living God*, Heb. iii. 12. It ſtops our entrance into the Church: *They entred not through unbelief*, Heb. iii. 19.

2. 'Tis of greateſt provocation. It offers an high contempt to the Glory of God. It calls his Truth and Goodneſs into queſtion. God ſays it, and Unbelief gain-ſays it, and gives God the lie: *He that believes not, makes God a Lyer*, 1 Joh. v. 10. Faith acknowledges him *the Amen, the faithful and true witneſs*: Infidelity ſuſpects his Truth,
E gives no credit to him. How ſeverely hath God puniſh'd this ſin? The Prince of *Samaria* was trod under foot for it. It coſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, the loſs of the Land of *Canaan*. How ill did God take it at King *Ahaz* his hand, *Will you weary my God alſo?* ſaith *Eſai*, Chap. vii. 13. It kept all the people of *Iſrael* out of the promiſed Land: *They entred not in, becauſe of unbelief*, Heb. iii. 19. They were guilty of many other ſins; but this excluded them. It depopulated the Church of the Jews;

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Jews; their unbelief caſt them out from being God's people. That Nation had many ſins; above all, they murdered the Lord of life, yet God offered them mercy, would have pardoned them that great ſin, if they would have believed and embraced the Goſpel: but, when they grew obſtinate in unbelief, then God caſt them away, *Rom.* xi. 20. *Becauſe of unbelief they are broken off*: that ſin made them Caſtawayes. See how *Paul* ſerves the bill of Divorce upon that people, pronounces the ſentence of utter dereliction upon them, *Acts* xiii. 46. *Seeing you put the word of God from you, and judge your ſelves unworthy of eternal life; lo! we turn to the Gentiles.* He leaves them to die and periſh in their ſins.

We come,

Secondly, To the cauſe increaſing this Unproficiencie; that's ſpiritual Blindneſs: *The God of this world hath blinded their mindes.*

In it three things.

I. The Authour that works this blindneſs, that's *the God of this world.*

II. The Advantage and Opportunity he hath to do it; that's implied in this word Ἐν οἷς, 'tis his *being in them.*

III. The miſchievous Effect he works in them, he ſtrikes them with *Blindneſs.*

I. The Authour of this ſpiritual Blindneſs is, *the God of this world.* Who is that? 'Tis an high Title: it ſounds like one of the glorious Titles of Almighty God: *He is the God of the whole earth*, Eſai. liv. 5. *The world is the* LORD'S, *and the fulneſs thereof.* He firſt made it, he ſtill ſupports it by the word of his Power, he orders and governs it, and will one day judge it. This made *Chryſoſtom* conceive, it was the true God that is here meant.

Others take occaſion by this Title fondly to imagine a double God. *Marcian*, he dreamed of two Gods: the one, the God of the Old Teſtament, him he term'd a *juſt God*; then he imagin'd another God of the New Teſtament, him he called the *good God.* A good God and a juſt God; whereas Juſtice and Goodneſs are both in our God. Then, he would have the *Old God* and the *New God*; wicked and blaſphemous contradictions! Newneſs and Oldneſs are utterly repugnant to our eternal God. *Novus Deus non fuit, vetus Deus non eſt.* No, he is alwayes the ſame, *Yeſterday, and to day, and the ſame for ever.* The *Manichees*, they ran wider, they would have a *good God*, and a *bad God*: Both curſed Hereſies, buryed in *Hell*, we will not taint the air with further naming of them.

The true intendment of the Apoſtle is, to expreſs and point out the Devil, that great ſeducer, that great oppoſer and adverſary of the Goſpel; 'tis he that blinds men, and hurries them to Perdition. He is called *The God of this world*: So our Saviour ſtyles him, *The Prince of this world*, John xii. 31. St. *Paul* calls the *Devils*, 1 Cor. ii. 6. *The Princes of this world*; and *Epheſ.* vi. 12. κοσμοκράτορας, *The Rulers of the darkneſs of this world.*

So

A So then, we must make these two enquiries.

1. What is his Dominion?

2. What is his Deity?

1. What is his Dominion? 'Tis *This world.* Here is one word seems to enlarge his dominion, *The world*; a word of wide compass: but but here is another word that confines it, 'tis *This world*; that's *terminus diminuens*, a word of confinement and limitation. It spoils his Divinity to limit him. Ye mar a God, if ye come to confine him. What poor Deities had the *Syrians?* they were *Gods of the Valleys*, forsooth! and not of the *Mountains*. Put their Gods into the *Valleys*,
B and they would do, I, marry, would they; but, set them on the *Mountains*, they could do nothing. A wicked man's God, is but the *God of this world*; both for extention and duration. But our God, he is the *Lord of heaven and earth*, there is the extention; and *his dominion is from everlasting to everlasting*, there is the duration of his dominion. Satan's petty Godship is limited to *this world*, he may rustle it here a while, but he bears no sway in the world to come. *Heaven is my Throne*, saith God, *and the Earth is my footstool. Thronus Diaboli* is *scabellus Dei.* The *World*, the *Devil's Throne*, is but *God's Footstool.* Our God in Heaven is all in all.

C How then is Satan *the God of this World?* The *World* hath a double acception: it signifies only the *Territory* and *Region*, or else the *Inhabitants* and *People* of it; that is, either the *things of this world*, or the *men of this world.*

(1.) Take it for the *Territory*, and then I demand, *Is Satan indeed the God of this world?* Surely, *The world is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* This frame of heaven, and earth, and all the Creatures in it, and parts of it, own no other God, but the only, true, living God. Satan hath no true original power over the least pile of grass, or dust of earth; he could not, when time was, and when it much concerned
D him, make *ex pulvisculo pediculum*, Exod. viii. not turn one grain of dust into the least poor, crawling Creature. Yet something there is that he bears the sway, carries the name of *the God of this world.* He is so,

1. By Usurpation; like an audacious Traytour, that sets himself up against his lawful Sovereign, and will settle and order the Kingdom without him. But this Title will prove too hot for him: He must claim it by another, such as it is, and that is,

2. By God's permission. He suffers Satan to play the God here, and to exercise a kind of power in this material world. God yields
E him the intermedling with the Creatures;

[1.] *Ut sint arma militiæ.* Gives him these advantages to strengthen himself, that Christ's victory over him may be the more glorious: as *Jehu* said to the men of *Jezreel*, *Now you have a strong City, fight for your selves.*

[2.] *Ut spolia victoriæ.* God permits him to domineer in these Creatures, as having got a kind of right over them by our overthrow.

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throw. So far as we had right in them, ſo far Satan won them by ſubduing us. A

[3.] *Ut vincula captivitatis.* He ſuffers Satan to domineer in theſe outward things, that they may be as bonds and fetters to hold his captives. The Riches, and Honours, and Wealth of the world, are oft-times Satan's fetters, in which he keeps his Priſoners and Vaſſals. But yet this power is ſtill under control, and liable to ejection. That's the Territory.

(2.) Take the World for the Inhabitants. St. *Peter* (2 Epiſt. *Chap.* ii. 5.) calls it *The world of the ungodly.* In that ſenſe eſpecially Satan is *the God of this world.* Wicked men are called *the World*; B

1. There is a world of them. A few good, very few in reſpect of the bad, they fill and people the world.

2. They are called the *World*, that's their proper element. *David* calls them *The men of this World, whoſe portion is in this life.* The Saints, they are but ſtrangers; they are *incolæ*, the other but *advenæ.* Saints are Pilgrims, the other ἐνιχθονιοι, home-born to the world.

3. They are the *World*, they bear all the ſway. The world was made for them, as the Sea for *Leviathan*, and they take their paſtime therein. God's people beg only, as the *Iſraelites* did, *Let us go by the King's high-way into our own country.* C

This is the *world* where Satan Lords it. That *world* which Saint *Paul* calls, *This preſent evil world*, Gal. vi. 4. That which St. *John* ſpeaks of, *The whole world lies in wickedneſs*, 1 John v. 19. That *world* againſt which Chriſt denounces a Wo, *Wo to the world, becauſe of offences*, Mat. xviii. 7. That *world* which ſtands in enmity againſt God, *The friendſhip of the world is enmity againſt God*, Jam. iv. 4. That which Chriſt prayes not for, *I pray not for the world*, John xvii. 9. That *world* which cannot ſee Chriſt, nor receive him, *John* xiv. 17. That *world* is Satan's dominion. That's the firſt Enquiry. D

2. The ſecond Enquiry is, What is Satan's Deity? How comes Satan to this greatneſs, to be *the God of this world?* I anſwer, He attains to the God-ſhip three wayes.

(1.) By neceſſary devolution. If the Lord be not our God, then Satan will be. The world is divided into two Bodies, and there are two Heads of theſe two Bodies; there are no Neutrals, that belong to neither.

1. The body of the Saints, the Church. Of that Chriſt is Head.

2. The body of the wicked and ungodly; Satan is the Head, they are his Limbs and Members. They that belong not unto Chriſt, they are Satan's portion. Theſe are the two Cities St. *Auguſtine* ſo much diſcourſes of in his Book *De Civitate*; *Jeruſalem* and *Babylon*; and all men are Citizens to one of theſe. The *New Jeruſalem*, that's *the City of God*; *Spiritual Babylon*, the Burrough and Incorporation of Satan. All, that are without the Borders of E

Jeruſalem,

A *Jeruſalem*, belong to *Babylon*. *Intra Eccleſiam Chriſtus, extra Eccleſiam Diabolus*, Cypr. When *Paul* caſt out wicked men out of the Church, he delivered them to Satan.

(2.) Satan becomes the God of wicked men, by their real and voluntary ſubmiſſion to him, as to their God. Indeed all wicked men do not in open and expreſs manner devote themſelves to Satan, (that's the high Apoſtaſie of ſome Monſters) but yet in true conſtruction, in real account, every wicked man makes Satan his God, and himſelf his ſervant. As he that chooſes to live in any King's Dominion, under his Laws, performs obedience, is to all purpoſes and conſtructions of Law
B ſuch a King's Subject, though he doth not perform actually any perſonal Homage, or ſwear Fealty to him: So wicked men live in Satan's Territory, ſubmit to all the Laws of his Kingdom, fulfil thoſe things which he accounts honour and worſhip to him. His will ſways them, his Vice-gerents, the world, and the fleſh, and the luſts of them, take up their hearts. If we obey Satan's Miniſters, we honour him. Many a man ſtands more in aw of the next Conſtable, then he doth of the King; but, by doing ſo, he approves himſelf the King's Subject.

(3.) Satan becomes the God of wicked men by God's juſt deſertion, and giving them over, and ſo Satan becomes a God to them. Obſtinate
C ſinners, God gives them over to Satan, he ſets Satan over them to rule in them, and to be effectual in them. The patience of God, and his expectation, by which he waits upon the hardneſs of our hearts, hath its date and period. When that is come, and yet we will not turn to him nor ſubmit, he then withdraws himſelf, leaves us to the power and malice of Satan, and he becomes a God to rule and govern us. 'Twas the heavy curſe and imprecation of *David* upon obſtinate, wicked men, *Let Satan ſtand at his right hand*, Pſal. cix. 6. Thus he gave over *Pharaoh*, and *Ahab*, and *Saul*, and *Judas*, to the power of Satan. He enters *in jus vacui*, he claims us then by way of Occupancie. When
D men are caſt off by God as forlorn and hopeleſs, all means have been uſed and prove unſucceſsful; then that man is made a Prey to Satan. He, that will not ſerve the true God, ſhall be a Vaſſal to Satan. They are driven out of the inheritance of the Lord, to ſerve the baſeſt of all falſe Gods, the Devil himſelf. *Such men*, ſaith St. *Paul, turn aſide after Satan.*

It ſhews us the great calamity that we bring upon our ſelves, by departing away from the living God. It puts us into the loweſt, vileſt ſlavery that can be, ſets Satan as a God over us. Many baſe ſubjections a wicked man makes to Satan, and Satan gets many Titles of Superio-
E rity over him.

[1.] Wicked men make Satan their Maſter, and themſelves his Drudges; and that's a baſe ſubjection, worſe then that of *Cham*, or *Canaan*, a *ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be*. Saint *Paul* aſſures us of this, *His ſervants you are to whom ye obey*, Rom. vi. 16. The life of a wicked man is a conſtant drudgery and ſervice of Satan. That's a baſe condition.

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[2.] Wicked men have a nearer relation, Satan gets greater intereſt in them; they make themſelves his Children; Satan becomes a Father to them. And though it ſeems otherwiſe, 'tis worſe to be a Childe, then a ſervant to Satan. They are more naturalized to him, of a nearer ſimilitude. *Moſes* had rather be a Bond-ſlave to *Pharaoh*, then a Grand-childe to him; rather ſuffer affliction under him, then enjoy pleaſures with him. And what are ſinners to Satan? St. *John* tells them, *They are Children of the Devil*, 1 Joh. iii. 10. *In this the children of God are manifeſt, and the children of the Devil.* Thus Chriſt tells the Jews, *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and his luſts do you*, Joh. viii. 44. A fearful thing to be reckoned Satan's Off-ſpring, the Seed of that Serpent, the Generation of the Viper. A B

[3.] The Devil gets an higher and more ſupreme dominion over them, he becomes their King and Sovereign. He is called *the Prince of this world*, John xiv. 30. So *Rev.* ii. 9. we read of *Satan's Throne*. Our Saviour tells us of *Satan's Kingdom*, Mat. xii. 26. A great Power, an heavy Yoke, an unſupportable Tyranny. The Dragon and his Angels, able to wage war with *Michael* and his Angels.

[4.] But of all ſubmiſſions and ſubjections, this is the vileſt and baſeſt to ſet up the Devil to be our God; not only to give him the ſervice due to a Maſter, nor the obedience of a Son unto a Father, or the ſubjection due to a King; but to ſtoop to him, as to the God-head, which we worſhip and adore. What's this, but to give the curſedeſt Creature the higheſt honour? 'Twere Treaſon to depoſe the King, though to crown his Son; but to ſet the Crown upon the vileſt Traytours head, and make him our King, 'twere double Treaſon. Yet thus deal we with God, vile Wretches that we are. In our daily Rebellions we diſclaim our Homage to his ſovereign Deity, and devote our ſelves to the ſervice of a Dung-hill God. C

It ſhews us *inſignem contumeliam*, the high contempt and indignity that God ſuffers from the men of this world. A wicked man, as much as in him lies, puts God out of his Throne, and places Satan in it. Indeed they cannot do it, *The Lord is God, be the people never ſo rebellious*: but that excuſes not the Worlds wickedneſs. As St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaking of luſting after a Woman, *Et illa caſta eſt, & tu Adulter es*; ſhe continues chaſt, and yet thou haſt *committed adultery with her in thy heart*. And ſo of him that hates his Brother, *Ille vivit, & tu Homicida es*; he is alive, and yet in thy heart thou art a murtherer. So the Lord is God in ſpight of all impiety; yet the world, as much as lies in them, do unthrone and un-God him. They revolt from God to his utter Enemy, and worſhip the baſeſt Creature, before the Creatour. You know with what indignation and deteſtation *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* vi. 15. *What? ſhall I take the members of Chriſt, and make them the members of an Harlot?* How much more diſhonour is it to take the members of Chriſt, and to make it a member and limb of Satan? D E

True; but who ſets up Satan as a God to worſhip him?

1. I anſwer; Some Nations expreſly do it, actually adore him, and ſacrifice

A ſacrifice to him. No doubt, a ſingular calamity it is, that the ſoul of man, made to ſerve and enjoy God, ſhould be ſo groſly beſotted, ſo woſully enthralled, as to exhibite that ſacred ſervice of Divine worſhip to that curſed Fiend. *Dii Gentium dæmonia*, Pſal. xcvi. 5.

2. All falſe and Idolatous worſhip (though it be otherwiſe meant) is, in God's account, the worſhip of Satan. The Jews pretended they imitated *Abraham* in ſacrificing their Sons; but what ſaith God of it? *They offered up their ſons and daughters to Devils*, Pſal. cvi. 37. Thus the Scripture reckons of all the ſuperſtitions and falſe worſhips amongſt the Heathens. 1 *Cor.* x. 20. *I ſay*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *that the things*
B *which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to Devils, and not to God*; though they thought not ſo. Nay, *Jeroboam*'s ſervice was intended to the true God JEHOVAH; it was but *Error in modo*: *Amos* calls it *the manner or way of Beerſheba*; that was all, and yet God accounted that worſhip as done to Devils. *Jeroboam ordained Prieſts for High-places, and for the Devils*, 2 Chron. ii. 15. The Chriſtians in *Corinth* thought they might eat of Heathens ſacrifices, they could diſtinguiſh betwixt the Meat and the God: Oh! no, ſaith *Paul*, *I would not that ye ſhould have fellowſhip with Devils*, 1 Cor. x. 20. A falſe Religion, 'tis the Devil's invention, and he that performs it, performs to the De-
C vil an act of Adoration.

3. Not only Invocation and Adoration, but every wicked and impious action is a real performance of worſhip to Satan; as a Chriſtian honours God and ſerves him, not only by the immediate acts of Religion, but by fulfilling of his will, by doing of that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight. There are Acts of Religion, and Effects of Religion: Acts of Religion, as Prayer, Invocation: Effects of Religion, as to *viſit the Widows and the Fatherleſs*, James i. 27. both are Proteſtations of honour and worſhip to God. Thou ſerveſt God in doing of any good deed. Why ſo?

D 1. Becauſe God hath inſtituted it, 'tis an act of his appointment and ordination.

2. Becauſe he accepts it at thy hands, and delights in it.

3. Becauſe his Spirit moves thee to it.

4. Becauſe his Glory is ſet out by it, his Kingdom is advanced by it.

5. Becauſe he will ſurely reward thee for it. In all theſe regards every good duty is a ſervice done to God. So an ungodly man, in his wicked courſes, performs a true, real worſhip and ſervice to Satan, though he think not of it.

E 1. Becauſe every wicked act is Satan's invention and ordination. St. *John* calls them all the works of the Devil: *For this cauſe was the Son of God manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil*, 1 Joh. iii. 8.

2. They are his works, he is ſerved by them, he takes great delight in them. *Non nidoribus paſcitur, ſed vitiis*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*: A wicked action is a ſweet ſacrifice in the Devil's noſtrils.

3. His

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3. His Spirit ſtirs them up to it, he rules in them, ἐνεργῶ, *he works effectually in the children of diſobedience.* Satan fills their hearts with thoſe ſinful motions; as St. *Peter* ſpeaks to *Ananias*, Acts v. 3. *Why hath Satan filled your hearts?* They obey his motions and ſuggeſtions. A

4. His Kingdom goes forward by it, he gains by every wicked action. And this makes him inſult over God himſelf, as *Chryſoſtom* notes, as having more ſervants and worſhippers in the world, then God himſelf.

5. 'Tis his ſervice, he will pay them their wages. A ſory, nay, an heavy reward it will be. But yet the Devils days-men they be, and he will recompenſe them. B

Tantum de primo, the Author and Worker of this Blindneſs in Unbelievers, *The God of this World.*

C

D

THE

E

THE THIRD SERMON ON II. Cor. iv. 3, 4.

In whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, leſt the light ——

THE Author of this Spiritual Blindneſs is the Devil, *The God of this World.*

II. A ſecond thing conſiderable is the Advantage and Opportunity that Satan hath in wicked men and Unbelievers, to blinde them; that's implyed in this word, Ἐν οἷς, 'tis by *being in them.* 'Tis not ſo much *inter quos*, amongſt whom; but *in quibus*, within whom. 'Tis a Speech of very great Emphaſis, and ſhews that Maſterie and Power that Satan hath over the ſouls of Unbelievers. He is in them, as in his poſſeſſion; the heart of a wicked man is the hold of Satan, the ſeat and reſting place of that Evil Spirit. Every ungodly man is a ſpiritual *Damoniack*; his ſoul 'tis the harbour and receptacle of Satan. As thoſe that are ſanctified, and believe, God's good Spirit dwells in them, fixes his manſion and abode in them; he makes the ſoul of a Believer his Temple and Sanctuary: *We are built up for an habitation of God through the Spirit*, Eph. ii. 22. God dwells in the heart of an *humble man*, Eſai. lvii. 15. So, on the contrary, every wicked man and Unbeliever, is the habitation of Satan: Such an one Chriſt calls *Satan's houſe. The unclean ſpirit takes to him ſeven other Devils worſe then himſelf, and they enter in and dwell in that man*, Mat. xii. 45. Our Saviour compares Satan, in the heart of a wicked man, to a *ſtrong man armed that keeps his Palace in peace*, Luk. xi. 21. he hath quiet poſſeſſion, abſolute command. Thus he took poſſeſſion of *Judas* his ſoul, *Luke* xxii. 3. *Then entred Satan into Judas.*

Here is the difference 'twixt a Saint and a wicked Sinner. Satan is *Sanctorum accola, impiorum incola*: he is but a borderer on a Saint, but a dweller in a wicked man. He may buſie himſelf about a good man,

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man, as an Aſſaylant: but he hath the full poſſeſſion of a wicked man, as an Inhabitant. *Miſſus eſt foràs* (ſaith St. *Auguſtine*) *non intrinſecùs dominatur, ſed extrinſecùs præliatur*: he is caſt out of a child of God, and ſo beleagures him by outward aſſaults only, but hath no inward hold or poſſeſſion of his heart. It may be, he may ſurprize the heart of a good Chriſtian ſometimes, ſteal in by ſome temptation; but he is in there like a Thief in a true man's houſe: but he is in the ſoul of a wicked man, like a Thief in his own harbour; the ſoul of ſuch a man, 'tis a den of Thieves. A

He ſurprized *Peter* by temptation, but was preſently caſt out again: but he entred into *Judas*, and took poſſeſſion of him. *Non modò adeſt, ſed ineſt*, ſaith St. *Bernard*: he is not only a Neighbour, but an Owner of wicked men. As *Auguſtine* alluding to *Nathan*'s Parable, concerning *David*'s Adultery, when he tells him of a Traveller that came to the rich man; "That Traveller, ſaith he, was that ſinful Temptation, "*Libido in* Davide *non rex, ſed hoſpes fuit; nec in eo libidinis* "*immoderatæ permanſio, ſed tranſitus fuit*; that Temptation, it was "a Traveller that turned in for a night, and departed again; it had "no fixed dwelling, or abode with him. But a wicked mans heart, is not *hoſpitium*, but *regnum Satanæ*: Satan doth not only lodge in a wicked mans heart, as a Traveller for a night; but rules and reigns in him. He aſſayes to carry Saints to ſin, but is not ſo prevalent with them, they reſiſt and repell him; but in a wicked man, he is effectual in all his temptations. ἐνεργεῖ; *he works effectually in the children of diſobedience*, Eph. ii. 2. He is in them as another ſoul to enliven them. He is like ſickneſs in a Saint; but like life in a Sinner. B C

This is the woful condition of an unconverted, unbelieving ſinner, though 'tis little thought of. To have our houſe haunted with an evil ſpirit, we think it diſmal; or a bodily poſſeſſion by the Devil, 'tis counted a dreadful vexation: whereas neither the one, nor the other is to be compared with this woful miſery of the Devil's ſpiritual inhabitation. *Excutiamus hunc pulverem*, ſaith *Chryſoſtom*, comforting *Stagirius* that was haunted with the Devil by a bodily obſeſſion; *We will ſoon bruſh off this duſt*, ſaith he: He makes no more of that bodily affliction; but 'tis an harder matter to diſlodge the Devil out of our hearts: a more ſad condition to become to Satan a ſpiritual habitation. That's the ſecond, the Advantage and Opportunity, Ἐνδύει, *He is in them.* D

III. We proceed to the third Particular, that's the miſchievous Effect which Satan works in them; he ſtrikes them with *ſpiritual Blindneſs*; Ἐπάφλωσε, *He blinds the minds of Unbelievers*. That encreaſes their Infidelity, makes them uncapable of the Myſteries of the Goſpel, they cannot ſee or behold the light of it. St. *John* aſſigns this for the cauſe why the *Jews* were ſo incredulous, that neither Chriſt's Sermons, nor his Wonders, neither his Oracles, nor his Miniſters could work them to Converſion, *John* xii. 37. though he had done ſo many Miracles before them, yet they believed not on him, 'tis ſtrange, he E

wonders

A wonders, as it is in *Esai*'s words, Lord, *who hath believed our report?* Well he gives the reason, *Verse* 38. *Therefore they could not believe, because Esaiah saith, He hath blinded their minds, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts.* This Reason ceases the wonder: *Illud miror*, saith the Father, *vel potiùs non miror, non attendere homines cæcos*; 'tis no wonder that blinde men cannot see.

Will you see the nature of this woful disposition, to be given over to blindness? There be many Considerations of it that make it woful, and those that are under it exceeding miserable.

B 1. 'Tis *malum spirituale*, a spiritual evil; and of all evils that can befal us, spiritual evils are most grievous. The spirit of a man is the chiefest part of a man: And so those things that make for the good of the Spirit, are the chiefest good; and those evils that do affect and afflict the Spirit, are the greatest evils. Deformity of Body to a sober judgment seems nothing so evil, as a deformity in the Soul. Who would not rather have a mishapen Servant, then a false perfidious Servant? Diseases of the Body are outward and more curable: but distempers of the Soul are inward and dangerous. Bodily blindness is a rueful spectacle: but to have the eye of the Soul darkened and blinded, is much more grievous.

C 2. 'Tis *in nobilissima parte spiritûs*. Blindness in our minds, 'tis a woful blindness: Why? the mind, 'tis the highest and most supreme Faculty of the Soul of man; and *Corruptio optimi, pessima*. The decay of the chiefest Faculties, 'tis the worst corruption. Now the mind of man, 'tis his excellency; 'tis that by which he is likest God; that wherein he bears his similitude. By that he is neerest, and even equal to Angels far above all other Creatures. To suffer in that, which is our beauty and excellency, 'tis the greatest suffering. As in Bodily Maims, to have a man's right Hand cut off, his Eye bored out, his Tongue, the best D Member that he hath, which *David* calls his *Glory*, to be rooted out; such maims are the most uncomfortable.

Nebuchadnezzar's loss of his Kingdom was not so great, as the loss of his Understanding; to have his Reason taken from him, and to have the heart of a Beast given him; Oh! that was hideous. We account those Diseases most uncouth and uncomfortable, that take away or impair our understanding, as Lethargie and Phrensie. Who would not rather suffer the sharpest bodily disease, then a loss of his wits and understanding? As *Augustine* saith, "Who had not rather mourn and weep all his life-time, and be in his wits; then to laugh all his life-E time, and to be distracted? He that loses his Reason and Understanding, is undone; the man is not himself. Such an evil is this Spiritual Blindness."

3. This Spiritual Blindness, 'tis a just Judgment that befals Unbelievers, thus to be struck with this woful Blindness. 'Tis most just, and suitable, and proportionable to their sin. They will not understand, and therefore they shall not understand; they will not believe,

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and therefore they ſhall not believe. As the idle ſervant in the Goſpel was juſtly and fitly puniſhed; he would not ſtir hand or foot to do his Maſter ſervice, how was he puniſhed? *Take the ſloathful ſervant, bind him hand and foot.* He that would not ſtir, ſhall now be ſhackled and manacled, and not be able to ſtir, *Mat.* xxii. 13. They that rebel againſt the Light, *caſt them into utter darkneſs.* A

This is the proportion of God's rewarding and puniſhing. *Fidem fide adauget.* He rewards our Faith, with encreaſe of Faith; and our good uſe of Grace, with more abundant Grace: But he puniſhes the neglect of Grace, with the loſs of Grace. *To him that hath, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance; but to him that hath not, ſhall be taken away even what he hath. Take away his Talent, and give it to another.* This reaſon Chriſt gives why he ſpake to the Jews in Parables, and would no longer preach plainly to them: *For whoſoever hath, to him it ſhall be given; but whoſoever hath not* (that is, hath made no benefit of it) *from him ſhall be taken even that which he hath. Therefore I ſpeak to them in Parables: becauſe they ſeeing, ſee not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they underſtand,* Mat. xiii. 13. now the plaineſt Sermons ſhall be Parables, Riddles, dark Speeches. Thus God puniſhes wilful Ignorance, with woful blindneſs. As he doom'd and ſentenced the *barren Fig-tree*; He looked for fruit and found none, he curſed it with barrenneſs, *Never fruit grew upon thee any more,* Mat. xxi. 19. *and it withered preſently*: So when he ſees us ignorant after all means, he curſes us with Ignorance, never let Sermon do this man good. He blows out the Candle, when men will not work by it. As *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* xxx. 17. *Oculus ſubſannans, The eye that mocks at his Father, and deſpiſes to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley ſhall pick it out, and the young Eagles ſhall eat it.* When we come to have *Oculum ſubſannantem*, when the eye of our Underſtanding, through unbelief, mocks at God, and deſpiſes his light, refuſes to behold it; O! then the Night-Raven of Hell ſhall pick out that eye, and ſtrike it with blindneſs. B C D

4. This evil, 'tis the heavieſt judgment that can be inflicted, thus to be given over to this Spirit of Blindneſs. St. *Auguſtine* by asking the Queſtion, puts it out of Queſtion; *Obſcuratio cordis, excæcatio mentis, numquid parva pœna eſt?* What think you? *Is Blindneſs of minde a light puniſhment? Sure,* ſaith he, *none will ſay ſo, but he that is blinde himſelf.*

Oh! 'tis an heavy judgment, not to be able to ſee Chriſt and the means of Salvation, 'tis a certain ſign of God's hatred; ſuch a man bears the brand of God's heavy diſpleaſure. Temporal puniſhments may be but chaſtiſements, as *Auguſtin* ſaith, *aut excitant ad converſionem, aut exercent virtutem; ſed occæcatio præparat ad damnationem*: but a blinded Mind, a dull and a deaf Ear, an hard, and impenitent, and unbelieving Heart, 'tis a teſtimony of God's heavy wrath and diſpleaſure. Bodily Blindneſs is no ſuch diſmal ſign, as Chriſt ſpake of him that was born blinde, *Joh.* ix. 3. *Neither this man nor his Parents ſinned*; 'twas not a curſe and vengeance, but for other good ends. But ſeeſt E

thou

A thou a man ſtruck with ſpiritual Blindneſs, given over to a reprobate minde? thou mayeſt conclude, *This man hath ſinned grievouſly*; it is that the wrath of God might be manifeſted on him.

Of all puniſhments thoſe are the worſt and moſt deadly, by which we are given over to ſin more wickedly. When God either ſmites his Miniſters with dumbneſs, that they ſhall no more call upon thee, *Let him alone*; or thee with deafneſs, that thou ſhalt not hear what is ſaid unto thee: when there is either *velamen in Moſe*, or *velamen in corde*; when the word becomes dark, or we become blinde! O! this judg-
B ment is of all others the moſt heavy. Thus St. *Paul* deſcribes this judgment, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 10. *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, therefore God ſent them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a Lye; that they might all be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.* 'Tis a bitter Sentence, *Rev.* xxii. 11. *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill*; and, ſo he that is ignorant, let him be ignorant ſtill; or, when God gives a man over to ſpiritual drunkenneſs, as *Jeremy* ſpeaks, *Chap.* xxv. 27. *Drink and be drunk, and ſpue, and fall, and riſe no more.*

5. Spiritual Blindneſs, 'tis a great evil, 'tis *inductivum aliorum*; it layes us open to all other evils. A man ſtruck with this Blindneſs, is
C ſubject and prone to fall into the groſſeſt Errours, ſtrong Deluſions, unreaſonable Apprehenſions. Even thoſe Truths that they know, ſhall vaniſh away. *Cùm facies veritatis contemnitur, nè terga ejus poſtea videntur*, ſaith *Gregory*. They that would not behold the face of Truth, they ſhall not ſee ſo much as the back-parts of it. *Even what they know naturally, as brute Beaſts, in thoſe things they ſhall deceive themſelves*, Jude 10.

What monſtrous Errours did the Heathen, and ſome unbelieving Chriſtians fall into? Such a blinde man how eaſily is he miſled now? how headily doth he fall into the vileſt ſins? *If any man walk in the*
D *dark he ſtumbles, becauſe there is no light in him*, Joh. xi. 10. he ſticks not at any wickedneſs. A blind man ſwallows any thing: He that ſees may eſcape Satan's temptations: as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* i. 17. *Surely in vain the net is ſpread in the ſight of any Bird*: but, let him blinde us firſt, we are for net, or ſnare, or pit-fall, there is no eſcaping them: As the *Philiſtims* did with *Sampſon*, firſt put out his eyes, then make ſport with him, put him to grinde.

O, Faith will teach us to diſcern and avoid even ſmall ſins; but Infidelity and Blindneſs of minde, will plunge us into any abominations: *Becauſe they would not know God, they were given over to vile*
E *affections*, odious ſins, *Rom.* i. 28. Such *are taken of Satan at his pleaſure*, 2 Tim. ii 26. They are his game and paſtime.

We ſee the dangerous nature of this ſpiritual evil. How is it wrought in us? For underſtanding of this, we muſt know, that this *Blindneſs of minde* is of divers ſorts. The Eye of the body is ſubject to manifold Diſtempers, that hinder the ſight: So is likewiſe the eye of our Soul. We will reduce them all to a threefold Blindneſs.

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(1.) Is *cæcitas Naturæ*. We are all naturally blinde in our understandings, as to ſpiritual things. Eagle-eyed to the World, it may be, we are; but Mole-eyed to heaven and heavenly things. There is a Film of Ignorance over our mindes by nature, which makes us unapprehenſive of ſpiritual Truths. *The natural man perceives not the things that are of God*; they cannot enter into him. A

(2.) There is *cæcitas voluntaria, a willing, voluntary, affected blindneſs*; when men cloſe up their eyes, refuſe to look out and behold the light of ſaving Truth. Such as *Eſay* complains of *Chap.* xxvi. 30. *They will not behold the Majeſty of the* LORD: ſuch, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks of, 2 *Pet.* iii. 5. *Of this they are willingly ignorant*: ſuch as *Solomon* complains of, *They love ſimplicity, hate knowledge, refuſe correction, ſet at naught God's counſel, will none of his inſtruction*, Prov. i. Who ſo blind, as he that will not ſee? Such as *Job* deſcribes, *Chap.* xx. 14. *They ſay to God, Depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes*. This is that poſitive Infidelity, that Divines ſpeak of; the ſin of men living in the Church, where the Goſpel is tendered to them, and ſalvation clearly propounded, and yet they refuſe it. B

(3.) There is *cæcitas inflicta*, an inflicted blindneſs; when men are ſtruck blinde. And this follows upon the former. Voluntary blindneſs brings penal blindneſs: Becauſe we will not ſee, therefore we ſhall not ſee. And this is ſometimes aſcribed to God, and reckoned amongſt his juſt Judgments; *Therefore they could not believe, becauſe* Eſay *ſaith, He hath blinded their eyes*, John xii. 39. This blindneſs, as 'tis a ſin, God hath no hand in it; but, as it is a juſt puniſhment of ſin, ſo ſo God hath to do in it. He ſends and orders all kinds of puniſhments. The culpable nature of it, as it is a malignity, comes from our ſelves, and from Satan: but the miſerable effects of it, as it is penal, ſo God diſpoſes of it. For this ſpiritual blindneſs is, as *Auguſtine* obſerves, both *peccatum*, and *pœna peccati*, *& cauſa peccati*. C

[1.] 'Tis a ſin, by which we refuſe the Goſpel.

[2.] 'Tis a puniſhment of ſin; *quâ cor infidele dignâ animadverſione punitur*. D

[3.] 'Tis *cauſa peccati, cùm malum cæci cordis errore committitur*. 'Tis a Monſter with three fearful Heads. Now the ſinfulneſs of it belongs to us and Satan; God only orders the penal reſpect of it. But yet, neither doth he actually and really blind mens Eyes, or harden mens hearts. God begets not, nor infuſes any ſuch wicked diſpoſition into us.

How then doth God blind mens Eyes?

1. He is ſaid to blinde men, *non illuminando*, becauſe he doth not enlighten them: Not, that he makes them blind; but he leaves them blinde, and doth not enlighten them. When he hath offered them the means of enlightening them, and they refuſe them; then God reſolves never to cure them, but ſeals them up in blindneſs. In the Goſpel he offers them his ſight, *Wilt thou receive thy ſight?* Revel. iii. 18. *I counſel thee to aneint thee with eye-ſalve, that thou* E

mayeſt

A *mayeſt ſee.* But upon our refuſal, he at laſt forſakes us. Thus *Moſes* expreſſes it, *Deut.* xxix. 4. *The* Lord *hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear unto this day.* Thus God blindes men, *non impertiendo malitiam, ſed non impertiendo gratiam,* Aug.

2. God is ſaid to blinde men, *tollendo lucem,* by depriving them of that light which he afforded them, and they abuſed. *Juſto judicio peccatorum cor obnubilat, quia non receperunt dilectionem veritatis,* ſaith *Gregory.* When we neglect the light, or abuſe it, 'tis juſt with God to remove it and take it from us. God oftentimes enlighB tens many a man, gives him ſome inſight into Religion; ſo that he underſtands many Truths in the Goſpel. Ye ſhall ſee ſome skilful in the Scriptures, and yet live in ſome wicked courſe, and *with-hold the Truth in unrighteouſneſs*: God quenches ſuch a man's knowledge, dries up his gifts, ſuffers him to fall into errour. That light which he had, is taken from him; the light that is in him becomes darkneſs.

3. God is ſaid to blinde men, *Occaſiones miniſtrando.* God doth not effectually blinde men; but by an holy and wiſe adminiſtration of occaſion, which wicked men abuſe to their own further blindC neſs. As meat is ordained to preſerve life; but yet it proves the occaſion of many a man's death. Thus the Miracles in *Egypt* were in their nature means of Faith and Converſion; but they proved to *Pharaoh* occaſions of blindneſs and further hardneſs. Thus *David* deſcribes the way of God's dealings, *Let their Table be made a ſnare to them, and let the things, which ſhould have been for their wealth, prove to them an occaſion of fall.* The light hurts ſore eyes; ſo doth the Goſpel occaſion the blindneſs of perverſe hearts.

4. God is ſaid to blind men, *Tradendo ſeductoribus*; by forſaking them, and giving them over to *Deluders*, and Impoſtors, and Spirits D of Errour. Thus God gave over the unbelieving Jews to the ſeducements of their falſe Prophets. *Their Prophets became Fools, their ſpiritual men mad,* Hoſ. ix. 7. He threatens the Jews that would not be better'd by true Prophets, that he would ſend to them deceived Prophets, *Ezek.* xiv. So he gave over *Ahab* to *lying Spirits*; *Saul* to an *evil ſpirit.* Thus God may be ſaid to blinde men.

But yet the Text here aſcribes it to the Devil: *Blindneſs of mind,* 'tis a work of Satan, he breeds it in men; both by his own malicious inclination, he delights to captivate men, and hold them in chains of darkneſs. He was by creation an *Angel of light*, but now he deE lights to be the *Prince of Darkneſs*; as alſo he doth, by God's juſt permiſſion and diſpenſation. He is *Iræ Divinæ carnifex*, the Executioner of God's juſt vengeance upon the children of unbelief.

Then the Enquiry muſt be, How Satan works this ſpiritual blindneſs?

Firſt, He doth it not by any violent means. Satan cannot offer any violence to our ſouls, he cannot break in upon us by any forcible entry, whether

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whether we will or no. Our Bodies may be liable to Satan's violence, but not our Spirits. Resistance of him, repulses him. He doth not like *Nebuchadnezzar*, that forcibly put out *Zedechias* eyes. This *blindness of minde* in wicked men, 'tis a sinful blindness, and every sin is in some degree voluntary. The Devil cannot make us sin, whether we will or no. Men, when they do not believe, they will not believe. A

Secondly, Nor can he do it by any immediate action upon our souls, by any *intimate real working* upon our understandings. The Soul of man is out of the reach of Satan, that he cannot extinguish the light that is in it, by any immediate action upon our spirit. 'Tis a true resolution of *Bonaventure's*, *Inducit Diabolus, immuta Deus, nemo cogit*; the Devil may allure us, God only can effectually change us, but none can constrain us. B

How is it then? 'Tis by some outward practices and insinuations, by which he gets into us cunningly, deceitfully, and so works this woful effect in us. And this he doth many wayes.

I. He blindes mens mindes by the efficacy of some false perswasions, by which he deludes them. And these perswasions they are either,

1. More prophane, and Atheistical, and Blasphemous, by which he bears some wretches in hand, that there is no such matter, as Preachers would make them believe: he tells them, That Religion is but a point of Policy to keep fools in aw: That Heaven is but a dream, Hell but a false fire, a meer imagination to affright men; all that they hear of God, and Christ, and the Gospel, the Devil perswades them, 'tis but a cunning Fable, invented to busie mens heads withal; and so they resolve all into plain Atheism. Where this perswasion takes place (as it doth with many) no marvel, though men close up their eyes at Religion, mock at all things that are told them out of God's Word, as a meer Fable. C

2. He hath more moderate perswasions to blinde common people withal; who, though they grant there is such a thing as a God, and Christ, and Religion; Yet, D

1. He perswades most men, there is no such danger as these Preachers do talk of. Though they be not so devout and Religious as they would have them: though not so strict of conscience to abstain from every smaller matter; yet, a grace of God, they shall do well enough: Hell is made for the Devil, and Devilish men, and outragious sinners; if they live fairly, and do as their neighbours do, and pay every man his own, they shall speed well enough, though they busie not their brains with these Quiddities of the Gospel. Thus Satan blinded *Eve*; he told her, She was too nice and scrupulous, and took God's word too strictly; she might please her self in eating the forbidden fruit, and yet do well enough for all that. E

2. He perswades men, there is no such necessity of knowledge of the Gospel, as they would bear us in hand. A little knowledge, a small taste of it upon the point of a knife, 'tis enough; if we keep

our

A our Church in fair weather, and when we are at leisure, and say our Belief, when we think of it, 'tis as much as needs: let Scholars and Book-men study the Scriptures, 'tis their business; *Their lips must preserve knowledge*; for common people, a few good meanings will help them to heaven. Satan conceals this, that Religion is a matter of common concernment, that we have all a like interest in God; all alike bound to believe in him: whereas St. *Jude* calls it *the common salvation*; and God tells us, that under the Gospel he looks for more knowledge, that *all should know him from the greatest to the least*, Jer. xxxi. 34. Divinity indeed is an Art for learned men,
B but Religion 'tis the common Duty and Profession of all.

That's the first way, False Perswasions.

II. Satan works this blindness in men by the Efficacy of Errours and deluding Superstitions. When he cannot keep out Religion out of the world, then he bewitches men with erroneous, and false, and superstitious Religions; and they are of an enchanting nature to hold men in Errour, and keep them from the Truth. *Idolaters* (the *Psalmist* saith) they are like Idols, *they have eyes, but they see not*. Thus he besotted the *Heathen*, infatuated them with the dotage upon their false Gods, that they could not endure to hear of Christ, or the Gospel. So
C he turned the *Jewish* Religion into Superstition. They were so wedded to their Law of Ceremonies, and their Temple so bewitch'd them, that they abhorred to hear of Christ, or a new form of Religion. And thus he hoodwinks and blindes the common sort of Papists; O! the the opinion of the Church, the Faith of their Fore-Fathers, it blinds their eyes, that they cannot endure to look upon the Gospel. These are called *strong delusions*, *making men to believe Lyes*. That's a second means, Efficacy of Errour.

III. Satan works this Blindness by the efficacy of divers Lusts that he breeds and nourishes in the hearts of men, and they steam up into
D the Understanding, and over-cloud and darken it. 'Tis so as in bodily Blindness; oft-times some noxious Vapour from the Stomach will ascend and stop the Optick Nerves, and cause a Blindness: and 'tis so in spiritual Blindness; sensual Lusts have a power to darken and besot, and infatuate our Souls: *Whoredom, Wine, and New wine, take away the heart*; Hos. iv. 11. The *Sodomites* were struck with blindness, and so Bestial Affections breed Brutish Cogitations; they will sit and dam up the Soul, leave no entrance for Grace or Religion; as a gross thick Mist will darken the Sun. 'Twas this that kept *Herod* from Religion; though he had some phansie to it, *John* Baptist
E could not prevail, and he set Christ at naught.

IV. 'Tis for some special purpose, that here Satan that is said to blinde mens minds, is called *The God of this World*. It points us out the main Engine and Instrument, which he uses to work this mischief, and that's the *Love of this world*. He knows full well, that the *Love of the World*, and the *Love of Religion*, can never stand together. If he can interpose the dark Body of the Earth 'twixt thee and the Gospel, he knows

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knows that will eclipſe it, that thou canſt not ſee the light and ſplendour of it. Satan takes the contrary way to Chriſt. *Spiritus Dei mentem, quam replet, illuminat; Spiritus autem Mundi excæcat*, Anſelm. Chriſt cured a blinde man by anointing his eyes with clay; that reſtored his ſtght to him: but Satan puts out our eyes with clay. The mire and muck of this World, 'tis of ſpecial uſe to the Devil to put out our eyes. Let him *ſet the World in our hearts*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Eccl.* iii. 11. *then no man ſhall finde out the work of God.* A

Other Luſts are Motes, but the Luſt of the World, 'tis a Beam in the eye of the Soul. The Bribes of the World will blinde the eyes of the wiſeſt men. Theſe Thorns will vex us in any part; but a Thorn in the eyes will make woful work there. *Balaam*, how clearly did God reveal his pleaſure to him? He calls himſelf *the man whoſe eyes were open*, Numb. xxiv. 4. Yet how did Covetouſneſs blinde him? his Aſs ſaw the Angel ſooner then he could. The *Phariſees*, how clearly did Chriſt preach to them? and this ſin blinded them. They laughed at all that Chriſt preached to them, *Luk.* xvi. 14. *The Phariſees, which were covetous, heard all theſe things, and they laughed at him. Judas*, what means and opportunities had he to believe? alwayes in Chriſt's company, dayly hearing his Doctrin, beholding his Miracles, and yet the *Love of the World* cloſed up his eyes too, and he forſook and ſold his Saviour. The rich man in the Goſpel gave a fair account of himſelf touching other ſins; but the *love of the World* that ſet him off from Chriſt. B C

Satan hath more confidence to keep us off from Religion by this *love of the world* then any other luſt. His perſwaſions drawn from this ſin:

1. Are more cunning, then from any other Luſt.
2. They are more commanding.

1. They are more cunning.

1. He will tell us, that the World and the Profits of it, are real and ſubſtantial; you may ſee it and enjoy it, full Bags and full Barns, I, there is ſubſtance in them: But, as for that, Religion and the Goſpel tells us of, 'tis all but matter of Faith; and that's to a worldly man, but matter of conceit and imagination; I, but the World and the Wealth of it, 'tis a ſenſible, real good. Wilt thou let go that, and look after Shadows, Dreams, Suppoſals, meer Imaginations? Such, ſaith Satan, is all that the Goſpel propounds and promiſes. D

2. He will tell us, that the World, and the Wealth of it, is a preſent good; here it is, we are ſure of it; and you may now preſently enjoy it. What? wilt thou part with a preſent good, an actual fruition, for a matter of reverſion and future expectation? All that the Goſpel promiſes, 'tis in another world. O, a worldly man laughs at that; give me preſent abundance, take Heaven hereafter they that will. E

3. This ſin is more perſwaſive; becauſe it pleads with appearance of Reaſon. Satan will tell you, the ſobereſt and wiſeſt men drive after the World. They that contemn and condemn other Luſts,

A Luſts, as ſenſual and brutiſh; yet the older and wiſer they grow, the more they eſteem the World. And is it not good getting that the wiſeſt men hunt after? Thoſe ſins are moſt dangerous, likelyeſt to prevail, that have moſt of Reaſon and leaſt of Senſuality. Such is Covetouſneſs. That's the Cunning of it.

2. *The God of this World* hath moſt confidence in this Luſt of the World, thereby to blinde us, and keep men off from Religion; becauſe 'tis a moſt commanding Luſt. It bears the greateſt ſway in a man's heart, more then any other Luſt. The Devil makes the World his Vice-Roy. A worldly man makes the World his God. Covetouſneſs,
B 'tis Idolatry, *Coloſ.* iii. 5. Now the having of the World for our God will bear us off from the true God, or his Religion. 'Tis hard to make a man give over his God. A man will ſooner change his Friend or Companion, then part with his Religion, if he have any in him.

Now Covetouſneſs is above all other ſins called Idolatry, *Col.* iii. 5. St. *Paul* names other ſins, *Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Evil Concupiſcence*, but then adds, *Covetouſneſs which is Idolatry*. Why? doth not every man make that which he loves moſt his God? 'Tis true; the Glutton makes his Belly his God, *Phil.* iii. 9. Yet in a ſpecial manner Covetouſneſs is Idolatry, ſo, as no other ſin is.

C Three things eſpecially make a God.

(1.) Our Judgment; when we eſteem it in our ſerious thoughts, to be our chiefeſt good, and that in which we place our happineſs: So doth no other ſin. It tranſports us with paſſion; but, in our ſober thoughts, we judge it not our chief good. But a Covetous man ſaith in his heart, *The riches of the World is the fountain of happineſs.*

(2.) Our Confidence; that's an Homage which makes a God. When we place all our truſt in any thing, make it our Rock, our Fortreſs, our All-ſufficient good; that's our God: ſo doth the worldly man only. He ſaith to the Wedge of Gold, *Thou art my confidence*;
D Job xxi. 34. *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong City*, Prov. x. 15. *He makes a mock at the counſel of the Poor, becauſe he puts his truſt in the* Lord.

(3.) Our Service; that to which we devote all our pains and labour, in the moſt careful, ſtrict manner; that's our God. *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, Mat. vi. 24. No Chriſtian is more attentive and watchful to wait upon God; then a Worldling is to attend upon *Mammon*. All his thoughts work that way.

Now then, if Satan can get this ſin into our hearts it will bear ſuch ſway in the Soul, that there can be no entrance for Chriſt or Religion.
E Such a man ſees ſo much in the World, that he can ſee nothing in the Goſpel. That dams up his Minde, darkens his Underſtanding. *Intùs apparens prohibet alienum*: there is a God already in a worldly man's heart, he hath no place left to entertain Chriſt in.

We have done with the third Particular, the miſchief Satan works in Unbelievers, by which he keeps them from Religion; he *blinds their minds.*

Serm. III.

So then, are Unbelievers blinded by Satan? is this their condition? Of it let us make some use. Briefly from hence we may gather these three Corollaries. A

I. Are Unbelievers blinde by Nature, and blinded by Satan? *Tollit scandalum*; it removes the Scandal of the Gospel, that so few in comparison do yield to it and embrace it. It hath been true in all times, God's part hath been the smallest. Few, very few, that have been truly Religious. The *Pharisees* could object it against Christ; *Do any of the Rulers believe in him?* None but a few of the meaner sort. Here is a just Solution of this Objection. 'Tis no marvel so few embrace Religion; 'tis a marvel rather, that any do, that any should see the light of the Gospel; for most men are blinded by Satan, that they cannot see it. *Miror*, saith St. *Augustine*, *non attendere homines; vel potiùs non miror non videre cæcos.* "'Tis a wonder that men should not give heed; "but 'tis no wonder that blinde men should not see, and give heed.' 'Tis a rare thing to see a blinde man recover his sight. What saith he in the Gospel? *Joh.* ix. 32. *Since the World began, was it not heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blinde.* Such is our natural condition, born blinde, and made blinde too. Christ satisfies himself with this, *Mat.* xi. when he upbraided the Cities where he had preached, for their unbelief and impatience; at last he resolves all into this, *Vers.* 25. *These things are hidden from the wise of this world.* This quietted St. *Paul*'s mourning for the *Jews* unbelief; *Rom.* xi. 7. *Well*, saith he, *the Election hath obtained it, and the rest are blinded.* B C

II. Are Unbelievers blind men? *Tollit præjudicium*; it slights the prejudice that such men have of Religion. Are Unbelievers worldly men, blinded in matters of Religion? Then regard not their Judgment, esteem not their Opinion, be not troubled at their Censures, which they pass upon Religion. When we hear a prophane man censuring of Piety, despising or condemning the wayes of God: alas! what is this but to have blinde men to spend their opinion, and pass their judgment about Colours, to finde fault with the light of the Sun, which they never saw nor know what it means? Were it not a ridiculous thing to hear a blinde man judge of Beauty or Deformity? As when one asked *Aristotle* what Beauty was? he tells him, 'twas τυφλῶν ἰσόμυια, 'twas a Blinde man's Question. 'Tis as ridiculous to hear worldly men spend their opinion and pass their Censures in matters of Religion. *Every one judges of those things aright, in which he hath skill and insight*, saith the Philosopher. Wicked men see no such excellency in Religion; no more doth a blinde man see any glory in the Sun. The judgment of one poor Christian, that hath the eyes of his understanding enlightned by God, is more to be esteemed in point of Religion, then the whole world of Infidels. Thus Christ put off and slighted the censorious *Pharisees*, that were angred at his Doctrin, *Mat.* xv. 12. his Disciples tell him, *Knowest thou not, that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying? Let them alone, they be blinde Leaders of the blinde*; they understand not what they censure, therefore regard them not. D E

III. Are

A III. Are men that believe not, no other then blinde men? *Exigit miſericordiam.* It ſhould move us to pity them in their Errours and Miſtakes in Religion. Every man looks upon a blinde man with pity and commiſeration. To ſee a blinde man fall into a Pit; who is ſo barbarous, as not to compaſſionate his ſad condition? How ſhould we pity the fondneſs and blindneſs of Men, that run themſelves head-long into Perdition? It was hard-heartedneſs in the multitude that rebuked the two blinde men, and bid them *hold their piece*, and not trouble our Saviour, *Mat.* xx. 31. Our Saviour was of another ſpirit, he had compaſſion on them: *He was a merciful High Prieſt, and had compaſſion*
B *on the ignorant, and of them that are out of the way*, Heb. v. 2.

With what compaſſion doth St. *Auguſtine* ſpeak to the *Manichees*, that were moſt groſs Hereticks? *Illi in vos ſæviant, qui neſciunt quantâ difficultate ſanetur oculus interioris hominis, ut poſſit intueri Solem ſuum:* "Let them be hard-hearted to you, that know not how "hard it is to get the eye of the Soul enlightned to look up to God. *Illi in vos ſæviant, qui neſciunt quantis gemitibus, & ſuſpiriis fiat, ut quantulâcunque parte poſſit intelligi Deus:* "Let them rage againſt "you, that know not how many ſighs and ſobs it will coſt us, e're we "can attain to the true knowledge of God.

C Blindneſs calls for compaſſion, not for inſultation. Conſider with what affection Chriſt looked upon ignorant unbelievers. When he ſaw a multitude of poor ignorant people, like ſtray Sheep without a Sheepherd, *he had compaſſion on them*, Mat. ix. 36. See with what affection he looked upon obſtinate unbelievers, *Mark* iii. 5. *He grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts.* Nay with what affection did he look upon malicious Unbelievers, his bloody Perſecutours? he pitied them, and prayed for them, as for blind men; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* And ſo did his firſt Martyr St. *Stephen*; he prayed for his Perſecutours. They flung ſtones at him, he ſent up prayers for
D them, and (it ſeems) more fervently then for himſelf. He ſtood on his Legs, when he prayed for himſelf: but he fell on his Knees, when he prayed for his Enemies; Lord, *Lay not this ſin to their charge.*

E

THE FOURTH SERMON ON II. Cor. iv. 3, 4.

In whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, leſt the light ——

WE have ſeen the miſchievous Effect that Satan works in the minds of Unbelievers. And, as the Effect is miſchievous, to ſtrike them with *Blindneſs*, ſo his intent is malicious. 'Tis not to deprive them of ſome ordinary comfort; or as the *Philiſtims* did with *Sampſon*, to make ſport with them; or, as *Naaſh* the *Ammonite* would have done with the men of *Jabeſh-Gilead*, bore out their eyes for diſgrace and ſcorn to them, to *lay it for a reproach upon all Iſrael*, 1 Sam. xi. 2. But his aim in doing of it is deadly and deſperate, 'tis to make them uncapable of the means of Salvation, to make their perdition to be unavoidable: *He blinds their minds, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

So then, here are three things that offer themſelves to our conſideration.

Firſt, What is that, that Satan chiefly oppoſeth and ſetteth himſelf againſt? that's the Goſpel.

Secondly, What is the Oppoſition he makes againſt it? What is the courſe he takes to hinder it, and to make it unſucceſsful? 'tis by keeping the world in deſperate ignorance, obſtinate Infidelity.

Thirdly, What is the End of this Oppoſition? *That the light of the Goſpel ſhould not ſhine into them, and they ſhould be ſaved.*

The firſt thing conſiderable is, what that is, which Satan mainly oppoſes; that's the Goſpel. Of all the wayes and works of God, his greateſt ſpight is againſt the Goſpel; his greateſt endeavour is to hinder the ſucceſs of that, and to make it unfruitful. And the Apoſtle doth not barely name it, but with a magnificent and moſt honourable expreſſion,

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preſſion, he calls it *The light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God.* And we may conſider this expreſſion of St. *Paul* in a threefold Notion. A

I. It ſets forth a Deſcription of the Goſpel. Let the World and profane men think what they pleaſe of it, and ſet it at naught; ſurely the Goſpel is a magnificent thing, full of light, and glory, and excellency. That's the firſt Notion.

II. This expreſſion of the Goſpel, it gives a reaſon, ſets out the motive why Satan doth thus malign and oppoſe it; *becauſe 'tis the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God.*

III. This expreſſion layes load, and aggravation upon this ſinful oppoſition, that Satan and Unbelievers make againſt the Goſpel; it makes this Sin appear *out of meaſure ſinful,* to ſet themſelves againſt ſo glorious a Goſpel. B

I. Let's take notice of it, as it is a Deſcription of Goſpel. And here obſerve two things.

1. *Paul* calls it ſo.

2. The Goſpel it is ſo; 'tis *a glorious Goſpel.*

1. I ſay, *Paul* calls it ſo. He names it with this addition of excellency, *The glorious Goſpel.* So he terms it in 1 *Tim.* i. 11. *The glorious Goſpel of the bleſſed God.* Why doth *Paul* add this Title and Epithete to it? Upon a double Reaſon. C

(1.) 'Tis the expreſſion of his affection that he bare to the Goſpel. The honour and dignity of the Goſpel was dear to St. *Paul*, he could never ſay enough of it, never ſufficiently admire the Goſpel. As before his Converſion, he breathed out nothing but blaſphemies againſt it; ſo now he breaths out nothing but praiſes and admirations of it.

There are three things that St. *Paul* never ſpake of almoſt, but with great raviſhments of affections.

[1.] *Jeſus Chriſt.* 'Tis obſerved, *Paul* ſtill triumphs in that bleſſed Name. That Name was as *precious ointment poured forth*; 'twas *as a bundle of Myrrh betwixt his breaſts*; 'twas Muſick in his Ear, as *Manna* to his Taſte, he ſtill ſets himſelf to magnifie that Name, and to make it glorious. St. *Auguſtine* reports of himſelf, that when he was ſcarcely in the ſtate of conception, not attained to the New birth of a Chriſtian, that the moſt eloquent Books were diſtaſtful to him, when he could not meet with the Name of *Jeſus*; as *Tullie's Hortenſius.* D

[2.] A ſecond thing which *Paul* mentions with much affection and delight, is *free Grace.* Oh the *grace of God! Paul* is evermore advancing that. He calls it *the riches of his grace*, Eph. i. 7. *the exceeding riches of his grace*, Eph. ii. 7. *the praiſe of the glory of his grace*, Eph. i. 6. Oh *the grace of Chriſt! Paul* felt the power of it, taſted the ſweetneſs, and, as he had great cauſe, *Paul* highly extolls it. E

[3.] A third thing *Paul* ſpeaks of with greateſt affection, 'tis the *Goſpel.* He ſtill ſets himſelf to magnifie that, and make it glorious. He tells us *the miniſtration of the Goſpel, it exceeds in glory*, 2 Cor. iii. 9. And this St. *Paul* doth, both as a *Chriſtian*, and as a *Miniſter.*

1. He

A 1. He magnifies the Goſpel as a *Chriſtian*, as one that hath felt the power of it in his own Converſion, reaped the fruit and benefit of it. What ſaith *David? I will never forget thy Teſtimonies; for with them thou haſt quickened me.* Let others ſlight this Goſpel, and ſet it at naught: that Soul that hath taſted the ſweetneſs, enjoyed the mercy, felt the comforts, which the Goſpel brings with it, cannot but break forth into admiration of it: that Soul will ſay, *Oh! 'tis a bleſſed and glorious Goſpel.* And as *Paul* doth it as a *Chriſtian*, ſo likewiſe,

B 2. He magnifies this Goſpel as a *Miniſter* and an *Apoſtle*, as one that is entruſted with this glorious Goſpel. So the honour of the Goſpel was precious to St. *Paul*; 'twas his care and zeal to take off all ſcandals from the Goſpel, to gain credit and reputation to it, to invite others to the fellowſhip of the Goſpel. St. *John* ſhews the end of the Miniſtery, 1 *John* i. 3. *That which we have ſeen, declare we unto you, that you may have fellowſhip with us.* Well, wherein conſiſts that fellowſhip? what is the dignity and excellency of it? *Truly*, ſaith he, *Our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Surely that's a glorious Goſpel, that gives us admittance to ſo glorious a condition. That's the firſt, 'tis *Paul's* Af-

C fection.

(2.) *Paul* calls it *a glorious Goſpel*, in oppoſition to that contempt which they in *Corinth* put upon the *Goſpel*. They ſlighted it, they ſaw no glory nor excellency in it. The more they deſpiſed it, the more *Paul* magnifies it. Let the *Jews* ſtumble at it, account it a ſcandalous thing: let the *Gentiles* ſpurn at it, eſteem it a fooliſh thing, ſay what they will; the more St. *Paul* cryes it up; Oh! 'tis *the Wiſdom of God, and the Power of God.* As the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, when others ſpake ſlightly of her Well-beloved, *What is thy Well-beloved above others, that thou ſo chargeſt us?* Cant. v. 9, 10, *Oh! my Well-beloved*

D *is the chiefeſt of ten thouſands, he is altogether lovely; this is my Friend, this my Well-beloved, O Daughters of Jeruſalem.* 'Twas *David's* zeal to the Law of God, *I will ſpeak of thy Teſtimonies even before Kings, and will not be aſhamed.* And *Paul* dares avow the glory of the Goſpel even in the moſt eminent places of the World, and where there were thoſe, that would moſt deſpiſe it: *Rom.* i. 15. *I am ready to preach the Goſpel at* Rome; *for I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the power of God to Salvation. Rome*, it was the ſeat of the Empire, all the glory of the world ſhined at *Rome*, 'twas the Theatre of Glory, and all the Learning, and Wiſdom of the world, it abounded at *Rome*:

E I, and the groſſeſt Idolatries and Superſtitions of this world, prevailed at *Rome*. What then? *I will boaſt of the Goſpel of Chriſt, even there alſo.* Nay, *Paul* glories in that which was the greateſt ſcorn and contempt of the Goſpel, the Croſs: That, amongſt *Heathen*, was the main reproach of the Goſpel. What? to believe in a crucified Saviour? Yes, *Paul* glories in that above all; *God forbid, I ſhould glory in anything, but in the Croſs of Chriſt*, Gal. vi. 14.

That's

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That's the firſt, *Paul* calls it a *Glorious Goſpel.* And as St. *Paul* calls it ſo: ſo, A

2. The Goſpel it is ſo, 'tis a *Glorious Goſpel.* So then we have here a magnificent Deſcription of the Bleſſed Goſpel.

(1.) Here is the Quality of it; it is *Luminoſum*, 'tis lightſome, of a ſhining nature.

(2.) Here is the Degree of that Quality, and the Excellency of it; 'tis *Glorioſum. Gloria*, 'tis *flos lucis*, Light in its Excellency, 'tis full of Glorious Light, a *Glorious Goſpel.*

(3.) Here is the Derivation of this excellency of the Goſpel, from whence the Goſpel hath all this glory. And here is a double derivation. B.

[1.] The firſt Derivation is more direct and immediate, that's from Chriſt; 'tis *the Goſpel of Chriſt.* That makes it glorious, that Chriſt ſhines in it.

[2.] A ſecond Derivation is mediate, and by reflection from God, in that Chriſt is the Image of God. Here is glory from the very Fountain of glory. All light comes from the Sun: all glory comes from the God of Glory. The Goſpel, that receives glory from Chriſt: Chriſt he receives honour and glory from the excellent glory of God the Father; as being the lively Image of his Father's Glory. C

(1.) Here is the Quality; The Goſpel, 'tis *Luminoſum*, 'tis full of light. That's one degree of Dignity in the Goſpel. 'Tis an excellency to be *vehiculum lucis.* Creatures, the more lightſome they are, the more noble they are and of greater dignity. Now, what is Spiritual Light, but Truth? What's the ſhining forth of this Light, but the manifeſtation of Truth? So then, the Goſpel is a ſhining Light, that is, it is the manifeſtation of ſaving Truth.

The better to conceive, that the Goſpel is Light, we may underſtand it, as Light ſtands in a double oppoſition.

1. Light is oppoſite to Darkneſs. D
2. Light is oppoſite to Dimneſs.

There are two things contrary to Light; *Tenebræ* and *Umbræ*, the Darkneſs of the Night, and the Dimneſs of the Twilight. In both theſe reſpects the Goſpel is a *ſhining Light.*

The firſt of theſe, 'tis the Darkneſs of *Egypt*, that's the Darkneſs of Nature.

The ſecond I call the Dimneſs of *Canaan*, the dimneſs and obſcurity of *Moſes* Law. In regard of both theſe, the Goſpel is a Light. Corrupt Nature, that is the very mid-night of Darkneſs and Ignorance, that can make no diſcovery to us of the way to life. By Nature we lay under the blackneſs of Darkneſs, compaſſed and overwhelmed with the ſhadow of Death. The *Jews*, they were not in ſo ſad a condition; the Law afforded them ſome glimmering of Light; they ſaw Chriſt dimly, ſhadowed forth to them by Types and Ceremonies: but the Goſpel reveals him openly; *Life and Immortality are brought to light by the Goſpel*, 2 Tim. i. 10. Here is E the

A the priviledge of the Gospel, here is the benefit of Christianity, would we make use of it. We live in dayes of actual Light, saving Truth is unveiled and opened to us. If thou missest the way to Heaven, thou mayest accuse thine own Blindness, thon canst not plead the Gospel's Darkness.

That's the first quality of the Gospel, 'tis *Luminosum*.

(2.) Here is the excellency of this quality, 'tis *Glorious*. There is Light in a Beam of Light; but Glory, 'tis the Collection of all the Beams and Rays of Light; as when the Sun shines forth in his full strength. Indeed Light, 'tis a most glorious Creature. Bodies, the
B more lightsome they are, the more glorious they are. And 'tis so with Truth, the more clearly it shines, the more fully 'tis manifested, 'tis the more glorious.

'Tis a prepostorous way, to think to honour and magnifie Truth by concealing of it. Were it not so common, so much preached, it would be more reverenced. Nay, verily, the more it is preached, as it should be, the more the glory of it appears: as the Sun is never so glorious, as when it shines forth in the midst of Heaven. As, on the contrary, they secretly confess there is something contemptible in them, that must keep a distance, come seldom into view, to breed reverence.
C True worth, the more it appears, the more it excels. Majesty, the more it is seen, the more awful it is; the more I see my Sovereign, the more I honour him. Those things that are but gilded over, their lustre wears off with use: but the Wedge of Gold, the more 'tis used the more it shines. Obscurity and Concealment dishonour Truth; they glorifie the Gospel, that do most clearly publish it. 'Tis an honour to Truth to be fully known.

So then the Gospel, 'tis a *glorious Gospel*. How so? wherein doth the glory of the Gospel consist? I reduce it to two heads.

1. The Doctrine of the Gospel, 'tis a *glorious Doctrine*.
D 2. The State of the Gospel is a *glorious State*.

1. The Doctrine of the Gospel, 'tis a *glorious Doctrine*; because in it the glory of God is most conspicuous. And wherein God appears most, there is most glory. Glory is nothing but the shining forth of his Majesty. Now the Gospel presents God to us, as in his Royal Throne, cloathed and compassed about with Majesty and Glory. That glorious Mystery of the blessed Trinity, that we believe one God in three Persons; we ow the clear manifestation of this sacred Truth to the Gospel. We make but dark Collections of it out of the Old Testament. And as that glorious Mystery of the
E Trinity; so that gracious Mystery of Redemption, the glory of it shines in the Gospel. And the glory of God, 'tis nothing so much seen in all other the Works of Creation and Providence, as in this one Mystery of the Gospel, the work of our Redemption. 'Tis the Master-piece of all God's Workmanship. In it is the concurrence of all his glorious Attributes. His Wisdom, his Power, his Justice, his Goodness, all shine forth most gloriously in this Work of Re-

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demption. Nay, not only the concurrence of all his Attributes; but the concord and agreement of them appears in the Gospel. There was a seeming repugnancy betwixt the Attributes of God, touching man's Salvation. His Justice, that called for our punishment: His Mercy, that interposed and pleads for Pardon. How can these stand together? If he pardon us, what becomes of his Justice? If he punish us, where is the glory of his Mercy? Well, the Gospel reconciles these. In Christ he hath satisfied his Justice; and yet, withal, he hath magnified his Mercy: *Now Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other:* Psal. lxxxv. 10. A B

That's the first, the Doctrine of the Gospel is a *glorious Doctrine*.

2. The Gospel, 'tis a *glorious Gospel*, because the *State* of the *Gospel* is a *glorious State*. The Christian Church under the Gospel, is made exceeding glorious: *Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.* 'Tis promised in the Old Testament, but performed in the New. The Prophet *Haggai* tells us, *that Christ at his coming, will fill his Church with glory.* Glorious Privileges, glorious Ordinances, glorious Endowments: with all these he hath enriched his Church. Our calling to the Gospel, 'tis a glorious Calling. St. *Peter* tells us, *We are called to glory and virtue,* 2 Pet. i. 3. The Spirit of the Gospel, 'tis termed a *Spirit of Glory*: *The Spirit of Glory, and of God, rests upon you,* 1 Pet. iv. 14. The hope which the Gospel propounds to us, is a *glorious hope*: St. *Paul* calls it *the hope of glory,* Col. i. 27. The State of the Gospel, 'tis so glorious, that the Prophet *Zacharie* foretells the meanest Christian, under the Gospel, shall be as glorious as the High Priest himself was under the Law. That sacred Inscription upon the High-Priests Fore-head HOLINESS TO THE LORD, shall now be engraven upon every Christian. The outmost Court of the Christian Church shall be as holy as the *Jews* inmost Sanctuary. Indeed, where there is most Grace, there is most Glory. Grace, 'tis Glory begun in us: Glory, 'tis Grace finished and consummate. Were we not wanting to our selves, and to the Grace of God, which the Gospel tenders to us, the weakest Christian might be as *David*; excel the state, out-grow the pitch of those in the Old Testament. *He that is least in the Kingdom of Grace, might be greater then they.* C D

I proceed to the third Particular; and so,

(3.) Here is the Derivation of this excellency of the Gospel; from whence it hath all its Glory. E

A double Derivation,

[1.] Is that which is direct and immediate, that's from Christ. 'Tis the Gospel of Christ. That makes it glorious that Christ shines in it. 'Tis the usual style and title of the Gospel; 2 *Thess.* i. 8. 'tis called *The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Law of Moses,* 'tis a Title of some Diminution; *The Gospel of Christ,* 'tis a title of Honour.

And

A And the Gospel, 'tis Christ's Gospel in a twofold respect

1. *Subjectivè*; the Gospel, 'tis all concerning Christ. *Rom.* i. 13. St. *Paul* calls it *the Gospel of God, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* That's one ground of Dignity from the Subject Matter of it. The Mystery of Christ, that *great Mysterie of Godliness*, that's the Argument of the Gospel; *that God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself.* All other Treasures of Knowledg, they are but Trifles to this great Wisdom. The Gospel teaches us to *know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge*, Eph. iii. 19.

The Gospel, 'tis Christ's Gospel

B 2. *Efficienter*; he is the Author of it: and that's another ground of Dignity. A glorious Author makes his work glorious. Now then, whence comes the Gospel? Let St. *Paul* tell us, *Gal.* i. 11. *The Gospel, 'tis not of men, nor by men, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ.* 'Tis neither from men, of man's invention; nor yet by men, by man's discovery; but revealed by Christ. *The Law was given by Moses*, he was the Mediator in that dispensation; *but* the *Grace and Truth* of the Gospel, *came by Jesus Christ*, Joh. i. 17. He is the Founder of our Religion, *He is the Apostle of our Profession; He is the author and finisher of our Faith.* He that is *in the bosome of the Father.* He that C *searches and discovers the deep things of God*: his is the Gospel. Put these two together, Christ the *Matter*, and Christ the *Author* of the Gospel: he inspired it, and that reveales him. In both respects, the Gospel, without controversie, is a *glorious Gospel.* That's the first Derivation. The second Derivation of this Glory

[2.] Is mediate, and by reflexion from the *excellent glory of God the Father.* 'Tis the Gospel of Christ, *who is the Image of God.* 'Tis a *glorious Gospel*, because in it Christ shines, who is *the lively Image of the glorious God.*

D For better understanding this great Mysterie, that Christ is *the Image of God*, we must conceive two things are emplyed in the nature and being of an Image. The

First is an Impression. The

Second is an Expression.

First, There must be a Stamp and Character of that whose Image it is, set upon the Image; that's the Impression.

Secondly, This Impression being made, then an Image hath another condition, that's a fitness of Expression, to represent and make known the thing whose Image it bears.

In both respects Christ is the *Image of God.*

E First, Take him in his Divine Nature; so he bears upon him the Impression of God.

Secondly, Take him in his Offices, as he is our Incarnate Mediator; so he is the *lively expression of God the Father*, and of his will and pleasure. Take him in the first respect, so he doth perfectly exemplifie him. Take him in the second respect, in his Office of Mediator; so he doth perfectly notifie him, and fully declare him.

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First, Let us with reverence behold and look upon the Divine Impreſſion, which, as Chriſt is the Image of God, he receives from him. For better conceiving of this, we muſt know, that a perfect and exact Image, imports four things: A

Firſt, *Similitudinem*: there muſt be a ſimilitude and likeneſs 'twixt the Image, and that whoſe Image it is. If there be no likeneſs, there is no Image. Therefore God forbidding us to make any Image of him, *Eſai.* xl. 18. gives this for a Reaſon, *To whom will ye liken God? or what likeneſs will ye compare unto him?* It muſt be,

Secondly, *Similitudo derivata*: the Similitude of an Image muſt be by Derivation: it muſt be drawn and taken from him whoſe Image it is, by an intended imitation. It muſt be, B

Thirdly, *Similitudo ſpecialis*: it muſt repreſent that, whoſe Image it is, in its proper and particular nature. It muſt not be in ſome common and general agreement only: as a Lion is like a Man in a common reſpect, as they are both living Creatures; but he is not like a man in the proper nature of Man, and ſo cannot be ſaid to be his Image. If it be a perfect and exact Image, it muſt be,

Fourthly, *Similitudo adæquata*, a compleat Similitude. Not a likeneſs in ſome one part, or reſpect only; and failing, and ſhort, and defective in the reſt: but it muſt be commenſurate and fully equal to that whoſe Image it is. C

Now, in all theſe reſpects to the full, Chriſt, and only Chriſt, as the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity, is *the Image of God the Father.*

We are entering into the thick darkneſs, where God dwells. We will touch them briefly; remembring that of the Heathen man, *Sanctius, & reverentius eſt, de Deo credere, quàm ſcire.* Theſe are matters of Belief, not of Diſpute.

I. Chriſt is the Image of God; he bears his Similitude. Indeed in ſubſtance they are both one. Likeneſs, or unlikeneſs, in that reſpect, were the wicked imaginations of the blaſphemous *Aſſyrians.* But as in D natural ſubſtance they are both one; ſo in perſonal ſubſtance they are alike, there is place for ſimilitude. As the Son hath the like lineaments that his Father hath; ſo hath the Son of God the like holy excellencies with God the Father. He is *the brightneſs of his Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon.*

II. Chriſt is the Image of God; he hath *ſimilitudinem derivatam.* 'Tis not, as ſome caſual ſimilitude 'twixt two men, that have no reference or dependence one of another; but ſuch a likeneſs as is betwixt a Father and his own natural and genuine Son. As 'tis ſaid of *Adam*, he *begat a Son in his own likeneſs. God the Father*, he is the *Samplar*; *God the Son* is the *exemplification* of his *Father's glory.* The eternal generation of the ſecond Perſon from the firſt, that's the ground of this Derivation. He is therefore like him, becauſe he is begotten of him. E

III. Chriſt is the Image of God, not only in ſome general notion, but he is the Image of God in his moſt ſpecial and proper being. Not only as God is a ſubſtance, ſo the Son of God is a ſubſtance; nor

A nor only as God is a Spirit, ſo his Son is a Spirit; but he is the Image of God, as he is God; the holy and divine Nature of the God-head as communicated to him.

IV. Chriſt is the adequate, exact, and compleat Image of God. All the excellencies and perfections of God are entirely in Chriſt. And this makes Chriſt to be the tranſcendent Image of God, above all other Creatures. *Man* was made *after the Image of God*, but with much abatement of this high perfection which is in Chriſt. Chriſt is the Image of God, as a Man's Son is the natural Image of his Father, and hath all the ſubſtantial perfections that his Father hath. But we are the
B Image of God, as ſome ſmall Picture, or Model may be ſaid to be the Image of a Man; ſhortly, imperfectly, darkly. The correſpondency and proportion 'twixt God and Chriſt is τὸ ἴσον· not only likeneſs, but equality: but the correſpondency 'twixt God and us, is but τὸ ὅμοιον, ſome ſhadow of ſimilitude. *Chriſtus, filius Altiſſimi, ac proinde Co-Altiſſimus*, ſaith *Bernard*. *The Son of the moſt High*, and *ſo moſt high in the glory of God the Father*. There is a great odds 'twixt theſe two, to be *made like God*, as we were; and to be *begot like God*, as Chriſt is. 'Tis a true Maxime in Divinity; *Deus nec æqualem ſibi condere poteſt creaturam, vel inæqualem gignere filium: God cannot make a*
C *Creature equal, or beget a Son unequal to himſelf*. All the glory of God the Father, is communicated to his Son. *Gloria Patris, Filius ſapiens*, ſaith *Solomon*, *A wiſe Son is the Glory of his Father*. Chriſt is the Wiſdom of God, and the perfect Image of the glory of God. Equality of Nature requires equality of Glory. *All men muſt honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, Joh. v. 23.

The Church-Story tells us, that the Emperor *Theodoſius*, bearing ſomewhat too much with the *Arrian* Hereticks, that denyed the equality of Chriſt with God, and would not aſcribe the ſame honour to the Son, that they did to God the Father: an holy and learned Biſhop
D coming into the preſence, where the Emperour and his Son and Heir were ſitting; the Biſhop did lowly obeiſance to the Emperour, but ſlighted his Son, and asked him, *How now, Boy!* without any more reverence. The Emperour being angry to ſee his Son ſo ſlighted; the good Biſhop anſwered him, *My Lord, O Emperour, you are much diſpleaſed that I honour not your Son; and is not God highly diſpleaſed, that you countenance thoſe that honour not his Son?* It wrought upon the Emperour, and made him more ſevere againſt thoſe wicked and blaſphemous Hereticks.

That's the firſt Conſideration of Chriſt's being God's Image, as an
E Image betokens an Impreſſion, and ſo doth exemplifie.

Secondly, An Image ſerves for Expreſſion, 'tis of uſe to notifie and make known that thing whoſe Image it is. As the former belonged to his Perſon; ſo this ſhews us the Office of Chriſt. As he is our incarnate Mediatour: ſo he repreſents and acquaints us with God the Father, and makes him, and his will, and pleaſure known to us. What ſaith *John Baptiſt*, Joh. i. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only-*

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only-begotten Son, which is in the beſome of the Father, he hath declared him. Cui veritas cognita ſine Deo? Cui Deus ſine Chriſto? ſaith *Tertullian*: He that knows not God, knows not Truth; and he that knows not Chriſt, he knows not God. *In ſimilitudine ſua Deum quæramus; in imagine ſua Creatorem agnoſcamus*, ſaith St. *Auguſtine*. Wouldeſt thou acquaint thy ſelf with God? behold him ſhining in his Son Chriſt, as his living Image. Thus our Saviour directs *Philip* to the knowledge of God, *John* xiv. 8 *Philip* ſaith to Chriſt, *Lord, ſhew us the Father, and it ſuffices*: What ſaith Chriſt to him? *Philip, He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father., Qui unum noverit, ambos noverit, propter omnimodam ſimilitudinem*, Aug. They are both ſo like, that he that knows the Son, cannot be ignorant of the Father. He is the Image of his Perſon, the brightneſs of his Glory, the Interpreter of his Counſel, the Angel of his Covenant, the Publiſher of his Pleaſure, the Mediatour of his Goſpel. But what ſaith St. *Paul*, Eph. ii. 12. *Without Chriſt, then ſtrangers to the Covenant, having no hope, and without God in the World.* Live without Chriſt, and live without God. *Our Fellowſhip muſt be with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Enjoy them both, or you have no part in either. There is no acceſs to the Father but by him.

So then, from this Deſcription of the Goſpel, 'Tis *the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God*; briefly take notice of theſe two Corollaries.

First, Take notice of the Truth and Bleſſedneſs of our Chriſtian Religion. See here how *God appears in Sion in perfect Beauty.* They talk of three Suns that have been ſeen in the Element: there are three glorious Suns in the Firmament of the Church:

Firſt, Here is the glory of the Father, ſhining like the Sun in his full ſtrength.

Secondly, Here is the Son of God, the *Image of his Fathers Glory*, deriving his Glory from the excellent Glory of God the Father.

Thirdly, Here is the Goſpel of Chriſt, the lively Image and repreſentation of Chriſt. The Father he ſhines forth in his Son; the Son he ſhines forth in his glorious Goſpel. Three glorious παρήλιοι no vaniſhing Meteors, but conſtantly abiding and ſhining in the Church. We may well ſay of the Church, what *Moſes* ſaid of *Iſrael*, *What People ſo great that hath God ſo near to them?*

I. Take notice here of an happy way for us again to recover our loſt Image of God, in which we were created, and which by our Fall was defaced in us. Here are three helps of the renewing of it.

1. Here is *Facies*, the lively Face of God, whoſe Similitude we bore.

2. Here is *Imago*, the lively Image of that Face of God, ſhining in Chriſt.

3. Here is *Speculum Evangelii*, the Glaſs of the Goſpel, whereby we may ſet our ſelves to the recovering of that Bleſſed Similitude. Fix thy Meditation upon the Holineſs of God; ſet before thine eyes that perfect

A perfect Image of his Holineſs, ſhining in Chriſt; be dayly compoſing thy Soul at this Looking-glaſs of the Goſpel, behold the Holineſs it repreſents to thee. This Looking-glaſs of the Goſpel, 'tis a rare Looking-glaſs. 'Tis not only for repreſentation, to ſhew us what we are; but it hath a virtue of Tranſfiguration. It not only ſhews Beauty; but conveys Beauty to us. See how St. *Paul* deſcribes it, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. *But we, with open face, beholding, as in a Glaſs, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

That's the firſt, the Deſcription.

B Secondly, Let's take notice of the reaſon of Satan's oppoſing; that's a ſecond Notion. The Goſpel, 'tis *the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God:* here is the ground of Satan's malice, that he bears to the Goſpel, why he ſets himſelf ſo much to deface it. The Goſpel, 'tis the glory of Chriſt, he is the glory of his Father; and the glory of God is that, which above all other things the Devil hates.

A bloody Traytor intending to murder his Sovereign, and being a long time deterred by the horrour of that ſin, began firſt to practiſe and embolden himſelf at the Picture of his Prince, that ſo at laſt he might venture upon the fact it ſelf. Satan's chief ſpite is at God himſelf; C but he cannot reach him: but the Image of God, there where God's glory ſhines moſt, that he malignes and labours to deface. He hates every Creature, becauſe in every Creature there is ſome appearances of God, *Similitudo veſtigii*: bnt he hates Man more, in him there is *ſimilitudo imaginis*. But Chriſt and his Goſpel, are the lively repreſentations of God the Father's glory; and therefore of all others, he oppoſes them. "Surely, ſaith *Tertullian*, it muſt be ſome excellent "thing, that *Nero* hated; the Goſpel is a moſt glorious Image of God, "and therefore the Devil doth ſo much maligne it.

He is the *Prince of Darkneſs*, and delights in Darkneſs, is an enemy D to any light; but his main ſpight is at the light of the Goſpel.

Firſt, He can better endure the Light of Nature, that's but a dim Light, weak and imperfect; it cannot reach further then this lower Region; it cannot lead us higher, nor conduct us to Heaven. He can be content to ſuffer men to live according to that Light. He will let them be civil and orderly men for humane converſation. Many have been ſo, and yet proved Caſt-awayes. This part of the Image of God the Souls of Reprobates retain even in Hell. As the Papiſts talk of their Sacramental Characters, they are indelible, they cannot be worn out of the Souls of the Damned. *Hæc imago* (ſaith *Bernard*) *uritur, ſed non* E *conſumitur*; this Image of God, Hell-fire cannot aboliſh it.

Secondly, There is another Light, that Satan can better endure, that's *Lumen Legis*, the Light of the Law. Sunder it from the Goſpel, 'tis but a dead Letter. His oppoſing of that, 'tis like his Diſpute about the dead body of *Moſes*: had he prevailed, he had gained no great matter by it. The Law, it may ſerve for Conviction, but not for Converſion. Nay, Satan accounts himſelf an Officer of the Law; 'tis the Writ,

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Writ, by which he doth arreſt the Conſcience of a ſinner, and hales him before the Bar of God's Juſtice. *Lex operatur Iram*, Rom. iv. 15. *The Law worketh Wrath.* St. *Paul* calls it *the Miniſtery of condemnation*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 9. that makes for Satan's purpoſes. But the Goſpel, and the Light of that, that's the matter of Satan's abhorrency; the malice of Satan is moſt againſt that. That is *Flagellum Diaboli*, the Devil's Tormentor. When he ſpies Chriſt in the Goſpel, he cries out, *Oh! art thou come to torment me?* A

That's the ſecond purpoſe of this Expreſſion, *The Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God*; it ſhews the Motive, why Satan oppoſes it. B

Thirdly, This Expreſſion is purpoſed as an Aggravation of the great ſin of rejecting and oppoſing the Goſpel. It puts upon this ſin a threefold Aggravation.

Firſt, It makes it a moſt audacious preſumptuous Sin. Doeſt thou offer contempt to the Goſpel? Thou offereſt contempt to Chriſt, to God himſelf, who ſhine forth in the Goſpel, and offer themſelves to thee. The greatneſs of the Perſon aggravates the contempt. *He that deſpiſes, deſpiſes not Manh, ut God*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 8. *Surely they will reverence my Son*, Mat. xxi. 37. They that ſpurn at it, will be found fighters againſt God, *Acts* v. 39. We cannot ſever Chriſt from his Goſpel. C The entertainment you give to it, he takes it as done to himſelf. *For my ſake, and the Goſpel's ſake*; Chriſt makes it all one; *Mark* viii. 35. Men ignorant of the Goſpel are ignorant of Chriſt and of God. And what ſaith *Eli? If a man ſin againſt God, who ſhall entreat for him?*

Secondly, It makes a ſin inexcuſable. He that oppoſes the Goſpel, ſins againſt the Light, againſt a clear glorious Light, that ſhines in the Goſpel. Such cannot plead ignorance. The Goſpel convinces clearly, ſhews the way of Life evidently. Ignorance for want of means of Knowledg is more excuſable. But when God ſets up a Light, and men will not ſee it, or make uſe of it, but refuſe, deſpiſe, oppoſe it: there is D no Plea or Excuſe for it. Thus *Paul* arraigns the *Jews* Infidelity, *Rom.* x. 18. *I demand, Have they not heard? Yes, verily.* That makes him conclude them to be a diſobedient and gain-ſaying People, *Verſ.* 21.

Thirdly, It makes it to be a malicious ſin, and of the greateſt impiety. Why ſo? becauſe it oppoſes the glory of God, that, wherein God's glory doth ſhine moſt clearly. Every ſin croſſes the will of God, and ſo, by conſequence, diſhonours him: but contempt of the Goſpel oppoſes the glory of God. God is moſt tender of his Glory, he will not ſuffer that to be defaced. As he that ſhould offer villany to the King's Picture, bewrays more malice, than he that breaks ſome of the King's E Laws: ſo injuries to the Goſpel deface God's glory, croſſe God's utmoſt end, which is *the praiſe of the glory of his grace*. God will not endure affront to his Glory.

Tantum de primo; what's that Satan oppoſes, 'tis the Goſpel. The next is,

Secondly, What's the Oppoſition he makes againſt it; what's the courſe

A course he takes to hinder it? 'tis by keeping the World in desperate Ignorance, and obstinate Infidelity.

Satan hath other practises to hinder it; as,

I. Falsifications of Truth by Heresies.

II. False Imputations by Slanders and Infamy.

III. Persecutions by Blood-shed, and all kind of Cruelty. But the main Engine is Infidelity.

1. All the rest serve only to fortifie this, and to strengthen his hold of men by Infidelity. He sows Errours, raises Slanders, stirs up Persecutions, disturbs the quiet and peace of the Church; all to hinder
B Conversion, to keep men off from believing the Gospel.

2. Those other practises of his may be over-ruled; the Church may get good by them; the Truth may be more cleared by them; Christians may be more confirmed by them: as the Experience of all Ages shews, that the Church hath gained by those other oppositions; but Infidelity, that banes the Church, 'tis a deadly mischief.

3. Infidelity is that he most aims at. He cares not so much, though the Profession of the Gospel have place in the World, and in mens opinions; God gets nothing by that, nor doth Satan lose by it: so he may keep it out of mens hearts. 'Tis Infidelity, that excludes this Gospel
C from the heart. He will let men talk of it and profess it; so they will not believe it.

4. Those whom he cannot enrage to persecution, yet such he can hold to himself by Infidelity; this Engine fetches them in. *Gamaliel* would be no Persecutour; yet Satan had enough to make him an Unbeliever. With this he catches moderate men, that cry out of cruelty; Let men have their liberty, force not their Consciences, away with Persecutions: Yet such men there are, that will not believe or embrace the Gospel. That's the Opposition, Infidelity.

Thirdly, What's the End of Satan's Opposition? *Nè luceat Evangelium*, that *the light of the Gospel of Christ should not shine unto them.*
D Satan envies the World the benefits of this blessed light, which is *shed abroad by the Gospel.* What are they? Take these four:

I. This Light of the Gospel, 'tis *Lux Vivificans*. Our Saviour calls it *The Light of Life*, John viii. 12. 'Tis a quickening and enlivening Light: as the light of the Sun revives every Creature, and puts vigour into it. 'Tis the Voice of the Gospel to men *dead in trespasses and sins: Stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*; Ephes v. 14. See how St. *John* describes our Saviour, *John* i. 4. *In him was life, and the life was the Light of men:* Death and Darkness, Light and Life,
E they go together. Christ brings *Life and Immortality to light by his Gospel.* That makes Satan malign and oppose it. The Region of death, that's the Territory of Satan. The Gospel rescues and recovers us out of that woful condition, and restores us to life. That makes him envy it.

II. This light of the Gospel, 'tis *Lux detegens*; 'tis a discovering light. It layes open all the Frauds and Impostures of Satan, by which

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he beguiles and circumvents us. Satan prevails more by Policy then by Power; ſubtilties and ſeducements are his wayes to deſtroy us. But the Goſpel that detects all his cunning. Acquaint thy ſelf with that, and *we ſhall not be ignorant of his divices*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. *Aſtutus eſt Diabolus; ſed Chriſtus Dei Sapientia*: the Devil is crafty, but Chriſt and his Goſpel, is the Wiſdom of God. That Wiſdom detects his Impoſtures, and that makes him envy it.

III. This Light of the Goſpel, 'tis *Lux dirigens*, 'tis a Light to direct and guide our feet in the wayes of Peace. It makes our way to Heaven plain before us. Thus *Eſai* deſcribes the Goſpel, *Chap.* xxxv. 8. *An high-way ſhall be there, and it ſhall be called, The way of Holineſs; the Way faring men, though Fools, ſhall not err therein.* And *Solomon* ſets it forth, *Prov.* iv. 18, 19. *The path of the juſt is as a ſhining light, that ſhines more and more unto the perfect day. But the way of the wicked is as darkneſs, they know not at what they ſtumble.* St. *Auguſtine* notes it, alluding to *David*'s Speech, they have ſet Traps, *juxta viam*, ſaith he, not *in via.* Satan watches for our wanderings out of the way; turn on either hand, and we are Booties to him. But the Goſpel teaches us to make ſtreight ſteps in our way. As *Solomon* ſaith, *The way of life is above to the Wiſe, that we may depart from Hell beneath*: that makes him to envy it.

IV. This Light of the Goſpel, 'tis *Lux exhilarans*; 'tis a refreſhing, chearing, and comforting Light; and that Satan envies us. Light and Gladneſs, Darkneſs and Sadneſs they go together. Now the Goſpel ever brings joy with it. As the Wiſe-men, when they ſaw the Star, they *rejoyced with exceeding great joy*. Still you ſhall ſee, where ever the Goſpel takes place, it brings Joy with it: they entertain it, as *Zacheus* did Chriſt; *He received him joyfully*. The *Eunuch*, when he ſaw this Light, *he went away rejoycing*, Acts viii. 39. The dejected and deſpairing Gaoler, as ſoon as he believed, *he rejoyced*, Acts xvi. 34. The City of *Samaria*, they entertained the Goſpel, and there *was great joy in that City*, Acts viii. 8. All theſe were πεφωτισμένοι, enlightened by Baptiſm, and forthwith rejoyced. This joy and comfort Satan repines at. He loves to have us rejoyce in Evil; or, if that will not be, penſive in Piety. In all theſe reſpects, Satan maligns the light of the Goſpel.

1. 'Tis an enlivening Light, recovers us out of the hold of Death, and ſo it deſpoils him.

2. 'Tis a detecting Light, and ſo it diſcovers him.

3. 'Tis a directing Light, and ſo it diſappoints him.

4. 'Tis a chearing and comforting Light, and ſo it vexes him.

The *Church*'s *Comfort*, is the *Devil*'s *Torment*.

FINIS.